

3-13-1992

Set design for A Raisin in the Sun

Laura S. Gygi-Gamble

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Gygi-Gamble, Laura S., "Set design for A Raisin in the Sun" (1992). Thesis. Rochester Institute of Technology. Accessed from

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
The College of Fine and Applied Arts
in Candidacy for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Set Design for *A Raisin in the Sun*

By

Laura S. Gygi Gamble

March 13, 1992

Approvals

Adviser: Nancy Chwiecko

Date: March 7, 1992

Associate Adviser: Charles Lewis /

Date: 3.11.92

Associate Adviser: Craig McArt

Date: March 10, 1992

Special Assistant to the Dean for Graduate Affairs: Phillip Bornarth

Date: 3/16/92

Dean, College of Fine and Applied Arts: Peter Gioppulos

Date: 3/18/92

I, _____, hereby (grant, deny) permission to the Wallace Memorial Library of RIT, to reproduce my thesis in whole or in part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

OR

I, _____, prefer to be contacted each time a request for production is made. I can be reached at the following address.

Date: _____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| BACKGROUND | |
| The Playwright..... | 2 |
| The Play and The Characters..... | 3 |
| The Crew..... | 6 |
| CREATING A SET DESIGN | |
| Research..... | 7 |
| The Design Process..... | 14 |
| Costumes and Lighting..... | 20 |
| Budget..... | 20 |
| CONCLUSION | |
| Comparison of Interior Design and Set Design..... | 22 |
| Comparison of Set Designs | 26 |
| APPENDICES | |
| Appendix A Sketches..... | 30 |
| Appendix B Southside Chicago in the 1950's..... | 34 |
| Appendix C Furniture and Finishes from the 1930's..... | 40 |
| Appendix D Preliminary Drawings..... | 51 |
| Appendix E Property List..... | 58 |
| Appendix F Costume Concepts..... | 61 |
| Appendix G Lighting Concept..... | 77 |
| Appendix H Budget..... | 85 |
| Appendix I Cochren's Ground Plan and Sketch..... | 88 |
| Appendix J Final Model and Drawings..... | 91 |
| LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS..... | 95 |
| WORKS CITED..... | 96 |

INTRODUCTION

My husband and I chose to go to Walt Disney World for our honeymoon, because of his interest in animation. When we arrived the world that surrounded us was fascinating. It was amazing and strange how, for the time we were there, this fantasy land became a form of reality for us.

While at Walt Disney World, I became very interested in set design. The environments created within Disney World allowed one to be entertained and amused, while traveling through dream lands. Being able to design with this kind of playfulness is very stimulating to me.

Upon returning home from Disney World, I began my education at Rochester Institute of Technology (R.I.T). I was introduced to many new technical skills, which I never had the opportunity to learn, during my Fine Arts education. Throughout the year I struggled with these technical skills, and as the year came to a close I understood the necessity for them. However, I still lacked the emotional playfulness that I was exposed to while visiting Disney World. With that in mind I began thinking about my thesis. I wanted to create a three dimensional environment unlike any I had created during my stay at R.I.T. When I was discussing various thesis topics with my advisor, she suggested designing a stage set for a local theatre in Rochester. I was thrilled with the suggestion.

I contacted Jim Tinsley, the Production Manager at GeVa Theatre in

Rochester. I hoped that he would allow me to use his guidance and GeVa's stage as a model. Much to my surprise, he was very receptive to this idea. During our first meeting, Jim gave me GeVa's standard set of blueprints including plans, sections and elevations. Jim thought it would be convenient for him and helpful to me if we chose a play that GeVa would be staging within the year. After some consideration, he suggested the play *A Raisin in the Sun*. This play was ideal, because of its literal style, providing a smooth transition between interior design and set design. All scenes of the play required the same setting. This meant there were no mechanicals involved in preparing the set for each scene. Also the play took place in an apartment which is a typical space interior designers work with.

It was time to familiarize myself with the play *A Raisin in the Sun*. I was given a script which included the cast of characters, the production notes, the dialogue for all scenes, a property list, and a costume plot.

BACKGROUND

The Playwright

In 1956, Lorraine Hansberry sat down to write a play which, as she later wrote to her mother, "tells the truth about people, Negroes and life." The play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, opened in March 1959 -- and, as *The New York Times* summarized on its 25th anniversary, it "changed American theatre forever." *A Raisin in the Sun* marked a turning point because,

as James Baldwin has written, "Never before in the entire history of the American theatre had so much of the truth of Black people's lives been seen on the stage." The play had its own origins in the playwright's own childhood experiences in the 1930's Chicago where, in defiance of the "restrictive covenants" that confined blacks to the ghetto, her family moved into a hostile white neighborhood. The family was evicted by the Illinois courts, but her father and NAACP lawyers fought the case all the way to an historic Supreme Court decision outlawing the covenant (*Hansberry vs. Lee*).¹

In *A Raisin in the Sun* she created a ghetto family poised at the final curtain, in all their complexities and contradictions though strengthened within, at the edge of a similar move into uncertainty. *A Raisin in the Sun* was to become an American classic - "one handful of great American dramas...in the inner circle, along with *Death of a Salesman*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and *The Glass Menagerie*" (Washington Post). It brought into the theatre a new black audience, encouraged a new generation of black artists, playwrights, and performers.²

The Play and The Characters

A Raisin in the Sun is about the Younger's, a black family living in Southside Chicago, during the 1950's. It deals with the inner desires of each family member. Because of these desires, conflict arises within the family. The matriarch of the household, Mama, desperately tries to keep the family together and happy.

¹ Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p.157.

² *ibid.*, 158.

The characters include Mama, Walter Lee, Ruth, Beneatha, Travis, Mr. Lindner, George, and Asagai. Mama is the widowed mother of Walter Lee and Beneatha. Walter Lee is married to Ruth and they have a son, Travis. Beneatha has two boyfriends George and Asagai. George is from Chicago, and Asagai is from Africa. Mr. Lindner, a white man, is the spokesperson from the white neighborhood, which the Younger's are moving into.

The family is awaiting a life insurance check of \$10,000.00, from the death of the father, Walter Lee (Sr.). The check belongs to Mama and she is very unsure about what to do with the money.

Walter Lee (Jr.) struggles with becoming the "man of the family". He would like the entire \$10,000.00 to invest in a partnership with two of his friends. They are planning to open a liquor store. Walter Lee is convinced that this is a "foolproof" business deal. Mama absolutely refuses to finance what she considers such an improper business as liquor.

Ruth is dealing with an unwanted pregnancy. During the play, Ruth contemplates an abortion. She feels it's unfair to raise another child in the run-down apartment in which they live. Travis, her son, already has to sleep on the couch due to the lack of space. She hopes Mama will use some of the money as a down payment on a house.

Beneatha wants to become a doctor. She is more philosophical than the rest of the family. She does not believe in God; or at least she feels that the human race should give themselves more credit for their

achievements, instead of blessing God for giving them so much. Beneatha is also very interested in her heritage. She is given the opportunity to go to Africa, to medically aid the African people, and to make them aware of their choices of freedom. Beneatha hopes a portion of the money will go towards her education.

Mama conveys an abundance of faith, pride, strength, and dignity. When these characteristics are challenged by her family she feels her family is failing her and the late Walter Lee. Mama elects to divide the \$10,000.00 among the family. \$3000.00 will go towards Beneatha's medical education. Mama also decides to make a \$3500.00 down payment on a house in a white neighborhood, because it is less expensive than a house in a black neighborhood. With the exception of the down payment, Mama gives all of the money to Walter Lee.

Walter Lee is put in charge of the money. Mama asks him to put \$3000.00 into an account for Beneatha's education and for him to look after what remains. Walter Lee does not put the \$3000.00 into an account for Beneatha. Against Mama's judgment, he takes \$6500.00 and invests it in the liquor store with his friends. One of his friends steals the money, leaving the Younger family with only the down payment on the house.

After Mama has made a down payment on a house, Mr. Lindner visits the Younger family. He is willing to pay them more money than they have already invested, if they do not move into his white neighborhood. Since

Walter Lee lost the \$6,500.00, he decides to take the money. The family is extremely disappointed in Walter Lee's decision. He is just about to take the money when he stands up for himself, his family, and his race. This is the day that Walter Lee becomes the "man" he's been striving to be.

Walter Lee speaks of the pride and advancements of his people. He will not destroy what his race has achieved by taking the money. The Younger family moves into their new house and Mama's pride is only strengthened by the pride of her family.

The Crew

The crew consists of the production manager, the director, the set designer, the set builders, the props people, the costume designer, and the lighting designer.

The production manager is in charge of the production from hiring the director and the designers, to making sure the set builders and props people are on schedule and within budget.

The director is in charge of the actors and the designers. All design decisions are based on criteria set by the director. The director makes all final decisions about design.

The set designer is responsible for designing a set which best represents the environment described by the playwright and by the director. The set builders are responsible for building the set according to plans, elevations, sections, and models conceptualized by the set

designer.

Props people are in charge of finding and/or making all the properties (props) for the set. The props can vary depending on the play. For *A Raisin in the Sun*, props included, a couch, a bed, chairs, lamps, food, pictures, flowers, a plant, and various other items.

Costume designers are responsible for designing costumes which will provide actors with the visual characteristics of their characters. Therefore, the costume designer helps make the actors seem believable on stage.

The lighting designer is responsible for lighting the stage according to the wishes of the director, the playwright, and sometimes the set designer. Lighting helps set the mood of the play and often aids in the set design. The lighting designer must design the lighting effectively to achieve the necessary result.

CREATING A SET DESIGN

Research

I began my research for this project by reading two theatre books that Jim Tinsley lent to me. I found them interesting, but more related to historical aspects of stage and theatre, than to the process of set design. Since I was designing a set for *A Raisin in the Sun* and modeling it to GeVa's stage, I felt it was important to learn about GeVa's stage specifically and to become thoroughly acquainted with the play.

The stage at GeVa Theatre is a thrust stage. A thrust stage has three visible sides rather than just one. It can be sculpted to the designers needs by removing parts of the forestage and by adding platforms to the remainder.

The proscenium is the area up stage from the forestage. GeVa's stage has proscenium walls that are uneven and jagged. Therefore, it is important for the set designer (designing from GeVa's stage) to measure from the plaster line rather than the proscenium walls, during the creation of the design. The imaginary line formed where the proscenium meets the forestage is the location for the curtain to be hung. Although a thrust stage has no curtain, it still contains a proscenium and forestage.

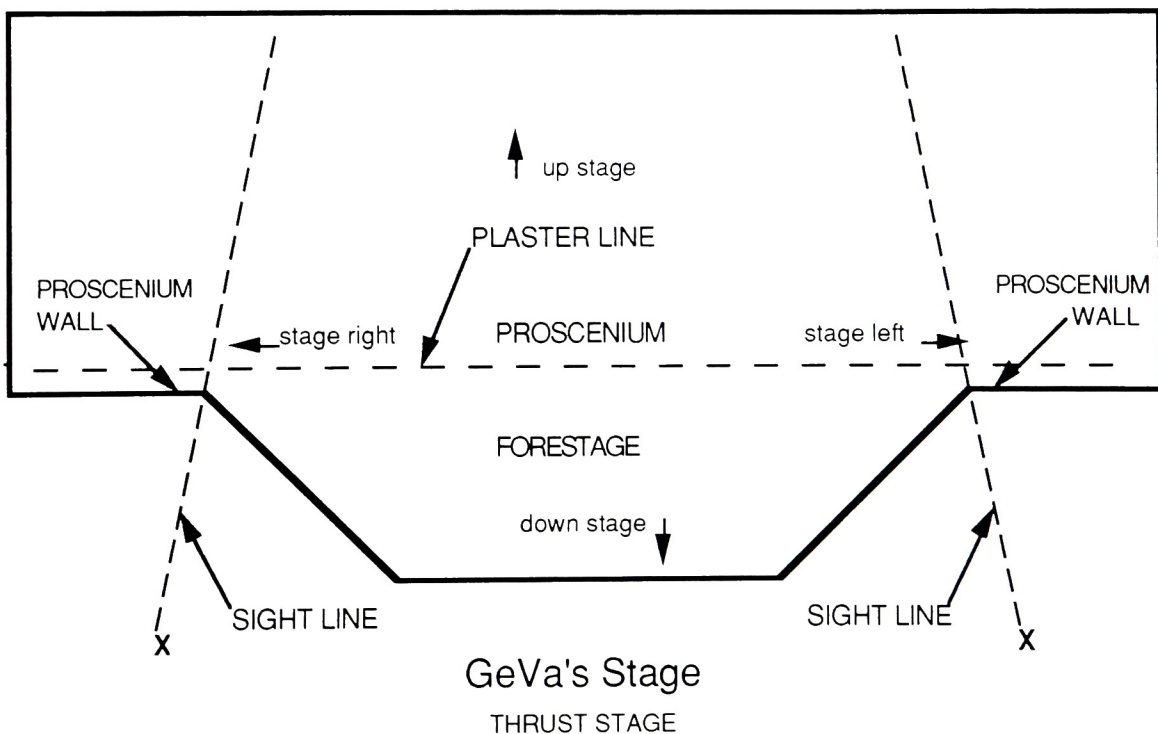


Illustration at ORCHESTRA LEVEL (NTS)

The blueprints include ground plans (similar to floor plans), sections, and elevations. The ground plans consist of the stage and the seating section. It was important to be aware of the sight lines in these plans. Sight lines are the boundaries that the audience can no longer see past or have a full view of the stage. There are four sight lines, two sight lines on the left side of the seating section and two on the right side. Two are located on the balcony level on either side and two on the orchestra level on either side. Important areas of the set should be designed within the sight lines.

The elevations and the sections consisted of the stage in relation to the trap rooms and to the catwalks. Trap rooms exist below the stage and can be used for special effects and mechanical operations. Catwalks are located above the stage. They may be used by the crew to aid in mechanical operations, electrical operations, or special effects.

Having never seen blueprints of a stage, I had difficulty understanding the relationships between catwalks, traprooms, and the stage. Jim Tinsley showed me the actual stage to better explain the blueprints on site.

It was challenging organizing the information from the script. I determined the space requirements for the set, by making a list of how many people would be on stage at a time and where their path of movement would lead. It was also important to read the production notes

which are a written description of how the playwright visualized the set.

PRODUCTION NOTES FROM *A RAISIN IN THE SUN*

The Younger living room would be a comfortable and well-ordered room, if it were not for a number of indestructible contradictions to this state of being. Its furnishings are typical and undistinguished and their primary feature now is that they have clearly had to accommodate the living of too many people for too many years-and they are tired. Still, we can see, at some time, a time probably no longer remembered by the family (except perhaps for Mama), the furnishings of this room were actually selected with care and love and even hope-and brought to this apartment and arranged with taste and pride.

That was a long time ago. Now the once loved pattern of the couch upholstery has to fight to show itself from under acres of crocheted doilies and couch covers which have themselves finally come to be more important than the upholstery. And here a table or a chair has been moved to disguise the worn places in the carpet; but the carpet has fought back by showing its weariness, with depressing uniformity, elsewhere on its surface.

Weariness has, in fact, won in this room. Everything has been polished, washed, sat on, used, scrubbed too often. All pretenses but Living itself have long since vanished from the very atmosphere of this room.

Moreover, a section of this room, for it is not really a room unto itself, though the landlord's lease would make it seem so, slopes backward to provide a small kitchen area where the family prepares the meals which are eaten in the living room proper which must also serve as dining room. The single window which has been provided for these "two" rooms is located in the kitchen area. The sole natural light which the family may enjoy

in the course of a day is only that which fights its way through this little window.³

After I read the production notes, I concluded that there were four important design problems which needed to be addressed to complete the set. The first and most obvious was the interior of the apartment itself. The second was how to describe what Southside Chicago looked like during the 1950's. The third was the psychological importance of the single window. The last problem was to make the apartment feel as though it existed as one floor of many in a multi-level apartment building.

Based on the production notes, I concluded that the apartment should contain a living room and a kitchen area. Most of the action occurs in these areas. They had to be visible to the whole audience and lie within the sight lines. The production notes also made reference to two bedrooms and a hallway that would contain a bathroom shared by other tenants. If the director chooses, these areas could occasionally be used throughout the play. Since the storyline is not dependent on the action occurring in these areas, they do not have to fall within the sight lines.

The single window became very important to me, as I read through the play. The window is symbolic of the family's hopes and dreams. It is beyond this window that the dreams of these people exist. Doors are accessible to the outside only when they are opened, whereas, windows

³ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 9 - 10.

provide visual accessibility whether opened or closed. Mama has a plant that is very dear to her. She keeps it on the window sill in the kitchen. It is the light of this little window that keeps Mama's plant alive, just as it is the dreams that keep the characters alive. I felt the window should be located in a prime position on stage, so it would not be overlooked. I had tried placing the window up stage, down stage, stage left and stage right. Finally, I decided up stage would be the best location. I preferred it to be somewhat centered within the apartment and always lit brighter than the rest of the stage for emphasis. Locating the window in a central position would allow direct focus on the window and it would not be overlooked.

Reference to the hallway, the bathroom, and one of the bedrooms, was created by using cutaway walls. A cutaway wall is constructed when part of the wall is physically removed so the audience can see through the removed area, into the space behind the wall. Cutaway walls were important because, they offered the audience more information. For example, a white man, Mr. Lindner comes to visit the Youngers just after Mama buys a house in his "white" neighborhood. He is a nervous man who comes to tell the Youngers they're not wanted in his neighborhood. Seeing Mr. Lindner through a cutaway wall, nervously approaching the apartment door, while the Younger family is happy, content, and hopeful on their moving day, creates a sense of anxiety for the audience.

The apartment is located on one floor of a multi-level building. The

script does not indicate which floor it is on. There is reference, however, to a multi-story building when Mama says, "My - them steps is getting longer and longer. Whew!"⁴ I felt it was important for the apartment to appear that it was located on one of many stories.

To further determine the limitations of the stage, I started drawing sketches to decide where both interior and exterior areas could exist on stage and how they would best relate to each other. (Refer to Appendix A to view sketches).

Creating the exterior world of Southside Chicago was important to the playwright and to many directors of *A Raisin in the Sun*. Having never seen Southside Chicago in the 1950's, I relied on research to determine how run down it really was. This research included photographs of Southside Chicago during the 1930's-1950's. The photographs were extremely important in designing the exterior world on stage. (Copies of the photographs are shown in Appendix B).

Another important aspect of my research included studying furniture, interior finishes, and appliances appropriate to the time and setting. Knowing that Mama had lived in this apartment since the day she married, 20 to 30 years before, led me to believe that the furniture was probably from the early 1930's.

Finding information on the 1930's style of furniture, that the

⁴Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 77.

average family owned was difficult. I had no problem finding furniture designed by Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, or international designers in the early half of the 20th century. However, this furniture was not financially available to the Youngers. Librarians at the Strong Museum, authorities on the history of the American home and society, led me to Sears catalogs and 1920's -1950's Better Homes and Gardens magazines. These magazines and periodicals contained furnishings used by typical middle-class families. Most of the information I needed was available in these magazines. Appliances and other furnishings, including a refrigerator, kitchen sink, stove, toaster, kitchen cabinets, wallpaper, rugs, and window coverings were based on information from these sources. From the Rochester Public Library, I found the book Furniture From the Depression Era. Without this book, I would not have been able to understand what Lorraine Hansberry's specification of 1930's "undistinguished furniture" looked like. (For research of furniture and finishes, refer to Appendix C).

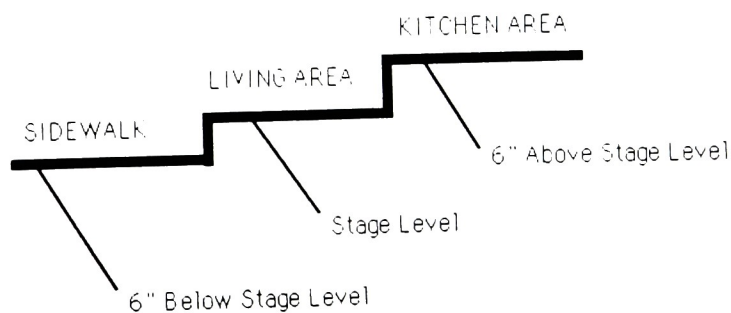
The Design Process

Utilizing my sketches and research data of the 1930's-1950's, I prepared preliminary drawings. Relating the two dimensional ground plan to a three dimensional set proved to be difficult. I had trouble visualizing where the walls ended and the catwalks began, because I didn't have a ceiling to work with as I always had with interior design. To better

visualize what I was doing, I worked three dimensionally from the beginning.

As stated by the playwright in the production notes, the kitchen area contains the single window and the dining table. In earlier sketches I had chosen the window to be upstage and centered. Much of the action takes place around and near the dining table, so I elevated the kitchen area 6" higher than the living room area to provide greater visibility.

One important aspect of the apartment was the exterior facade of the building and a sidewalk. To express this, I chose to create the illusion of looking through a brick wall into the apartment. Placing a sidewalk in front would help create this illusion. I was careful not to make the facade and exterior leading to the apartment more important than the apartment itself. I left the living room area at stage level and lowered the sidewalk to 6" below stage level. (As previously noted, I raised the kitchen area to 6" above stage level.)



Levels of Stage (drawing not to scale)

As I noted previously, it was important to make the building appear as though it were taller than 2 stories. Most apartment buildings that I researched were 3 or more stories in height. The maximum footage between the catwalks and stage level was 22'-8". There was enough vertical space to provide almost two stories. I chose the facade walls to be 22'-8" in height to use the maximum footage. The interior walls should be 12'-0" in height. This provided a wall tall enough so the audience in the balcony couldn't see over the walls. No roofline or detail was added on the facade that would confine it to only 2 stories. At first, I assumed I could add a second story to the apartment giving the illusion of an apartment above. I found this approach to be very inappropriate; instead, the Younger apartment appeared to consist of 2 stories. Therefore, I chose to leave the interior walls at a single story of 12'-0", rather than a two story 22'-8" in height.

Scrutinizing the script again, I followed the circulation paths of the characters. These paths were critical to the furniture placement. At no time could any furniture block the path of the character or be inconvenient to utilize.

The next step was to draw elevations of the interior walls and the facade and consider additional detail. I included some patterns of the wall finishes and furniture on the elevations. At this stage, the elevations were drawn to show the physical structure of the design and to

show some detail of style. (Preliminary drawings are shown in Appendix D).

At the completion of the preliminary drawings my advisors critiqued the design. It was suggested that I pay more attention to the style of the facade of the apartment building. There was not enough detail on the facade to give the building architectural significance. Uncertainty existed between the relationship of the two story facade and the single story apartment. It became necessary to start building a preliminary model, so I could experiment with these issues.

I decided a white model would be the best representation for the set of *A Raisin in the Sun*. Color and pattern could change dramatically, from that chosen by the set designer and that executed by the set builders and props people. If a set designer chooses a green patterned couch from the 1930's, the props people would probably find one from the 1930's but, it could very easily be in brown or mauve with a pattern different from the one the set designer chose. In *A Raisin in the Sun*, the playwright specified the couch as old, worn, and undistinguished. Since she did not specify any color, pattern, or style for the couch, it is not necessary to spend the time and money to reproduce a specific couch. The character of the model is more important than the exact replica of the set.

The preliminary model was built of foam core, paper, and wood. Since my elevations were already in preliminary form, it was very easy to

use the measurements from the elevations while building the model. All the furniture was in block form just to determine spatial relationships on the stage.

The finished preliminary model presented some problems. The main problem was the awkward relationship between the two story facade and the single story apartment. Another problem was that the set was more spacious than I had expected. Third, the exterior was undeveloped. At this point, I had only planned to utilize a backdrop of painted scenery depicting Southside Chicago during the 1950's. More description was needed.

During a meeting with Jim Tinsley, we discussed the problems inherent to the preliminary design. The facade was approximately one story taller than the rest of the walls and it created an unbalanced relationship between the two. Jim suggested I add flats behind the apartment walls depicting buildings from Southside Chicago's environment. A flat is a rectangular frame work of lumber covered with linen, muslin, plywood, luan, or other material. It is a basic piece of framed scenery, that can represent a building facade, interior wall or landscapes. Incorporating the flats, I could add a backdrop of implied distant scenery. The physical presence of the added flats and their height would not only solve the problem of the awkward relationship between the facade and the interior walls, but would also give a more realistic image of Southside Chicago. The apartment's spatial problem was improved by

moving the whole apartment downstage two feet.

There were many things to consider while preparing the final production. The first was the ground plan. Moving the apartment down stage forced me to adjust all the measurements to coincide with the loss of square footage. The ground plan would indicate floor materials and furniture layout. From the completed ground plan, I could use measurements to draw the final elevations. The elevations would include indication of my choice of wallpaper, base, cornice, molding, doors, furniture, and paint. It is from these elevations that a set builder would draw a set of working drawings. After I finished the ground plan and the elevations, I needed to build a final white model of the set in a scale of $1/2"=1'-0"$. It was important for the model to show furniture, molding, base, doors, kitchen appliances, and cupboards in the 1930's style, because the model is a representation of the design.

From the script, I discovered many details which were critical to the set. For example there was a picture of the late Walter Lee (Sr.), a vase with flowers, doilies placed on the sofa, and a mirror on the closet door. Scripts also include a property list. The property list includes props that the playwright feels are important for the actors to utilize during the production. (Refer to Appendix E for the property list). Many of the items in this list had to be reproduced at a scale of $1/2"=1'-0"$ in the model.

Costumes and Lighting

Once an actor is on stage, the set is greatly affected by the actor's visual presence. For the look of the play to be cohesive and believable, it is necessary for the set designer to consider costume and lighting design while designing the set. (Refer to Appendix F to read the costume concept).

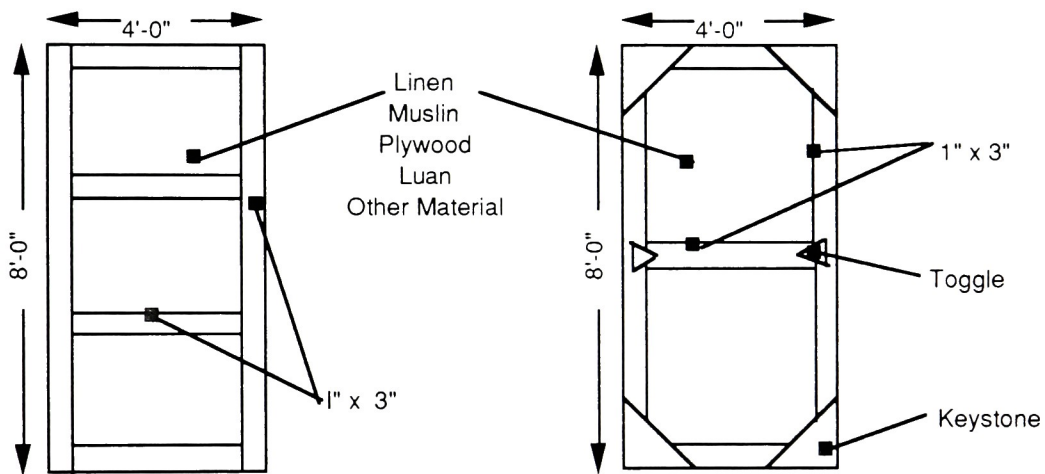
One major factor in any set design is the lighting. The set is greatly affected by the lighting design. Lighting is important for emphasis, mood, and clarity of a play. For these reasons the set designer should always be aware of lighting during the design process. (Refer to Appendix G to read the lighting concept).

Lighting and costumes are complicated aspects of a play production and are specialized fields. The set designer does not usually create the final lighting or costume design. Because of time constraints and the scope of this project, I chose to develop only preliminary concepts for the costume and lighting design.

Budget

Set designers work within a budget determined by the client. The client may be the art director, production manager, or director. To make this project as complete as possible, I estimated a budget. Preparing the budget involved research on the fabrication of theatre set flats, platforms, and other construction methods. GeVa Theatre uses a

Hollywood flat instead of a theatre flat, because the Hollywood flat is less expensive to construct than the theatre flat. A Hollywood flat is constructed with 1"x3"s and is typically 4'-0" x 8'-0" in dimension. It has two supports and is joined with nails or screws. A theatre flat also is constructed of 1"x3"s and is typically 4'-0" x 8'-0" in dimension. It has one support and is joined by 2 toggles and 4 keystones.



HOLLYWOOD STYLE FLAT

(nts)

THEATRE STYLE FLAT

(nts)

The number of flats and their finishes determines a major percentage of the budget. My drawings were grouped together on a number of pages and mounted on mat board. With each board of drawings, called a plate, I had to determine how many flats were needed. Then I had to calculate the quantity of wood, paint, luan, molding, wallpaper, brick, and various other materials the flats would require. With Jim's guidance, I concluded that the set should cost between \$8,000.00 and \$10,000.00. The

final budget was \$9226.13. (The materials needed and their prices are listed in the budget in Appendix H).

CONCLUSION

Comparison of set designs

Felix Cochren was the set designer who designed the set for *A Raisin in the Sun* for the GeVa theatre's actual 1991 production. " 'I began by reading the script,' Cochren says, 'and then I research the area in this case, Chicago in the '50's. I make notes about the characters and then discuss all of it with the director. We have to decide whose play this is, which character this play is about. Then I go away and create the whole world.' "⁵ Both Cochren and I began designing our sets by reading the script, researching Chicago in the 1950's, and determining character needs. Thereafter, Cochren and I approached our designs with different attitudes.

I did not talk to the director, as did Cochren, because I never had the opportunity. If I had it's possible my attitude could have changed, because set designers design according to the criteria set by the director. Cochren and Woodie King Jr., director of GeVa's 1991 production of *A Raisin in the Sun*, decided that the central character of this play is Walter Lee. They consider him "a reckless man looking for a quick fix to his family's social status. Consequently, Cochren began to design a set that reflected Walter

⁵ Gary Resch, "Creating the Set of *A Raisin in the Sun*" *A Raisin in the Sun* program, p. 40.

Lee's predicament. Cochren says, 'Walter Lee is trapped in a whole lot of things. He wants very much to get out, as does the rest of the family. But since the focus is on Walter Lee, we're trying to make the set something that confines and imprisons him.' ¹⁶

I think that in a broader sense we would all come to the same conclusion. The playwright has focused on a black society imprisoned by the ghetto. I feel it is important to concentrate on the entire family during the creation of the set and not just Walter Lee. The family is in a predicament together. What one member does, reflects upon every member of the family. Mama must deal with allowing her son to become a man, sending her daughter to college, and keeping her daughter-in-law from having an abortion. Ruth must accept being pregnant, raising a son in a run down apartment, and making a marriage work. It becomes necessary for Beneatha to learn to love unconditionally and understand what is attainable without letting her dreams fail. Walter Lee desperately wants to be a man by owning his own business and having money. Regardless of the approach, I think Cochren's idea of creating a claustrophobic environment was an excellent design statement. A claustrophobic environment can help portray the frustration and anxiety the Youngers felt trying to leave the ghetto.

My design statement was one of hope where hope did not exist. I

⁶ Gary Resch, "Creating the Set of A Raisin in the Sun" A Raisin in the Sun program, p. 40-41.

wanted the audience to understand that even though these people were in predicaments, they never lost sight of their dreams. It is through hope and dreams that they were able to move into a better environment and gain the love and understanding between family members. I feel my design was more optimistic than Cochren's was.

The backdrop of Cochren's set was outstanding and very effective. In Southside Chicago, during the 1950's, the el trains were very important recognizable sights. The el train track in forced perspective on Cochren's back drop added much dimension to the representation of Southside Chicago. (Refer to Appendix I for Cochren's sketch of the el train tracks and his ground plan). Although it was painted on a two dimensional form, it made me feel as though there were no boundaries of the stage. The track appeared to go on indefinitely. I chose to design my el train track with a three dimensional form that started stage left and ended stage right. The track was located up stage and surrounded my representation of Southside Chicago. It was a three dimensional form, that read flat when compared to Cochren's two dimensional form.

Another difference was the facade. I had designed a facade to the apartment building and a sidewalk. I felt it was important because it would convey a frame of reference for the audience. I felt there was enough action which could occur in this space to warrant its generous use of stage footage. Cochren chose not to design a facade to the apartment

building. After having designed a facade of the apartment building on my set, I felt Cochren could have improved his set by designing a facade. Also in my set, I chose to create the hallway and bedroom visible to the audience, so action could occur in those places. This is a choice that I feel could work effectively if directed carefully. Cochren chose not to expose these areas. I strongly feel it is advantageous to the storyline for the audience to experience the action in these spaces. More drama, tension, and emotions could be exposed.

Metaphors are very important in this play, but one needs to be careful not to over-use metaphors. I feel that is what happened with Cochren's set. Cochren said "Every detail he administered to the trapped theme. 'The clotheslines and telephone wires were worked into the apartment itself, serving as extension cords, going up and over things. There aren't enough outlets in this house. Not enough outlets for the electricity, the power that Walter needs to break out. There are a lot of little metaphors in the set. Nothing is arbitrary.'"⁷ Some of the metaphors that existed on stage lost their significance to Cochren's design. For example, I found myself questioning the abstract representation of telephone wires, that Cochren had created above the apartment. Since his set was literal, incorporating an abstract intertwining ceiling of telephone wires caused confusion, instead of

⁷ Gary Resch, "Creating the Set of A Raisin in the Sun" A Raisin in the Sun program, p. 41.

making the design feel more claustrophobic.

While reviewing the sets, the differences were few. Those which I found, when compared to the similarities, did not make one set better than the other. They merely expressed our individual approaches and our personal attitudes toward the play and our designs. The play was very literal and yet I feel we both successfully accomplished the requirements with two different attitudes. Designing a set that encompasses the audiences attention to the atmosphere that exists for the characters is important. Part of a set designer's responsibility is to take the audience into the fantasy world. The atmosphere and the feeling that each set radiates is one very distinct similarity. (Refer to Appendix I to view the final model and drawings.).

Comparison of Set Design and Interior Design

Since the set designer is creating a temporary environment, he or she is allowed to create with fewer limitations than an interior designer. A set designer is not as concerned with fire codes and barrier-free requirements as an interior designer or an architect is, for the following reasons. A set is used by actors who rehearse on the set and become very familiar with it. A set is not used by the general public as is the theatre itself. The set is temporary, whereas a building is permanent. Materials used to construct the set are similar to architectural materials. In set design the use of the materials does not have to conform to fire codes.

For instance, a flat representing a wall, built of luan and 1"x3"'s does not have to meet a fire rating, whereas in interior design a wall of studs and gypsum board does. A set designer's design has to be functional according to the script. If a script calls for a bedroom and no action occurs in the bedroom, then the set designer can place a non-functional door on a flat that leads nowhere. An interior designer has to be sensitive to human needs. If a client wants an interior designer to design a bedroom, the designer cannot place the door leading to a space that does not have enough square footage for a bed, a dresser, a closet, and circulation. But a set designer can.

The process of interior design and set design is quite similar. Without my interior design education, designing this set would have been next to impossible. I would not have known how to demonstrate my ideas on paper. It was helpful understanding the process of design I had learned from courses at R.I.T., such as, starting with bubble diagrams and working my way step by step to the final production. I had to know how to read blueprints, draft plans, draw and render elevations. It was beneficial to have experience working with building codes. For example, I knew I wouldn't want to create an opening, which a person might walk through, less than 2'-6". Any measurement less than that could cause inconvenience in exiting or entering the stage. Standard measurements such as the height of the kitchen counter and sink (approximately 3'-0")

was helpful information I gained from my education in interior design.

Before beginning this project, I had never heard of the play *A Raisin in the Sun*. It was interesting learning about the playwright, Lorraine Hansberry, and her play. Hansberry's creation is very enjoyable to read. Each character has a developed personality, which makes it easy to identify with them and understand their predicaments. I feel she wrote a very effective script.

I learned a lot about the process of putting a production together. It takes a fairly large crew, to make the production possible. Each crew member has his/her job to perform, budget to follow, and deadline to keep in order for the production to run smoothly and on schedule.

From research to final production, I thoroughly enjoyed creating the set. The creative development of the set was very stimulating for me. Because it was difficult to find information, learning about the styles from the 1930's was frustrating at times. By the final production of the design, the drawing and model-making of the intricate detailing became monotonous. Regardless, it was an extraordinary experience and I hope to have more opportunities in set design. I feel that set design required my knowledge of both my interior design and my fine arts educations.

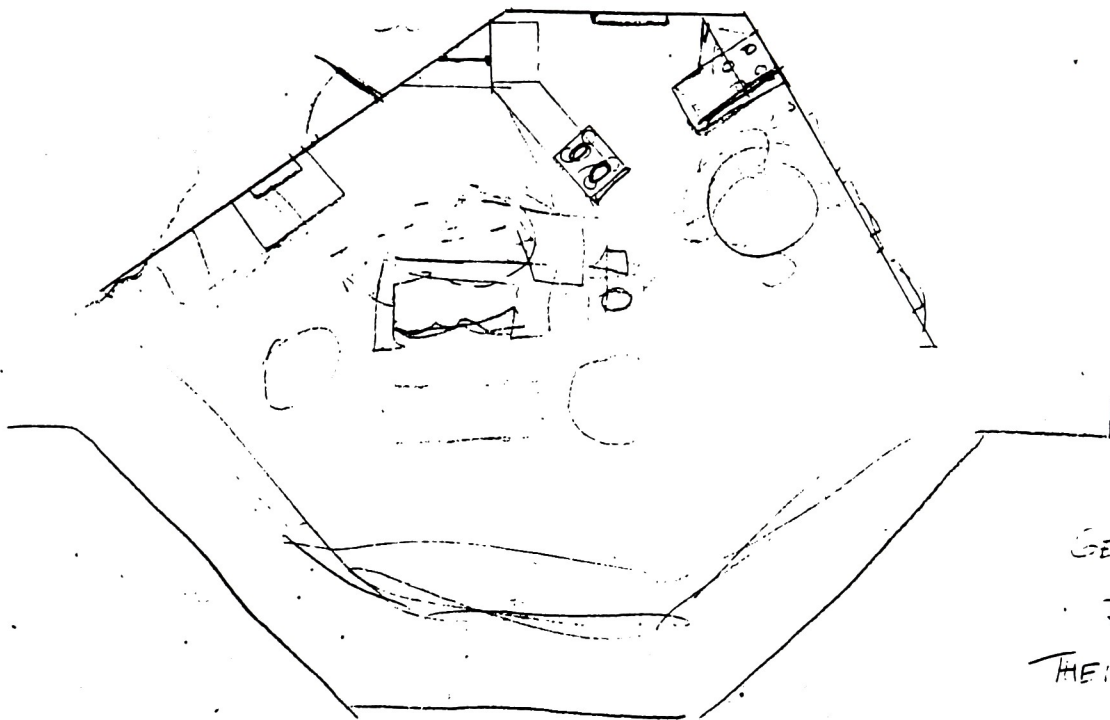
Thanks to Jim Tinsley, Production Manager at GeVa Theatre, and to my thesis committee, I was able to fulfill my desire of designing a set. The experience I have gained is irreplaceable.

My relationship with Jim Tinsley is one that has provided an interaction between the Interior Design Program at R.I.T. and GeVa theatre. This will give other students interested in set design a chance to experience the process, under supervision of the professors at R.I.T. and the staff at GeVa theatre.

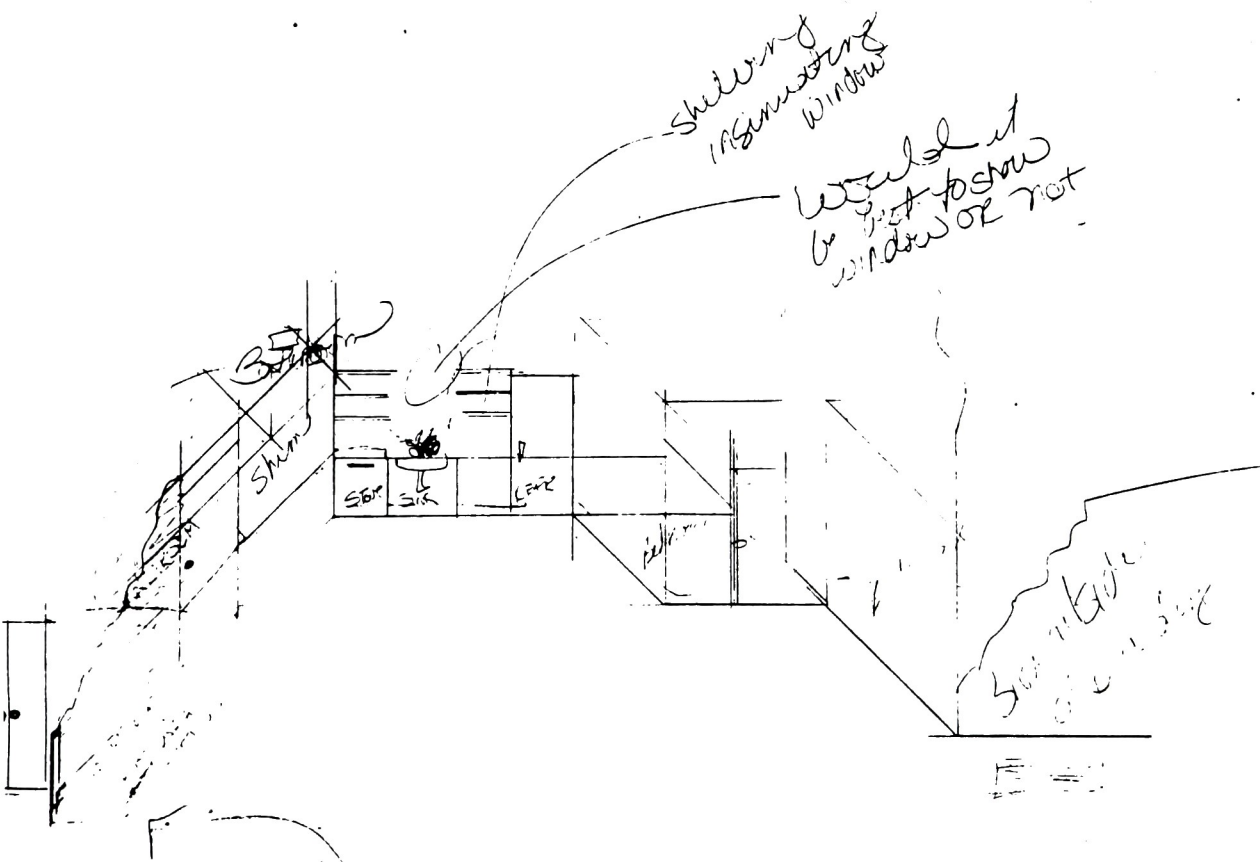
APPENDIX A

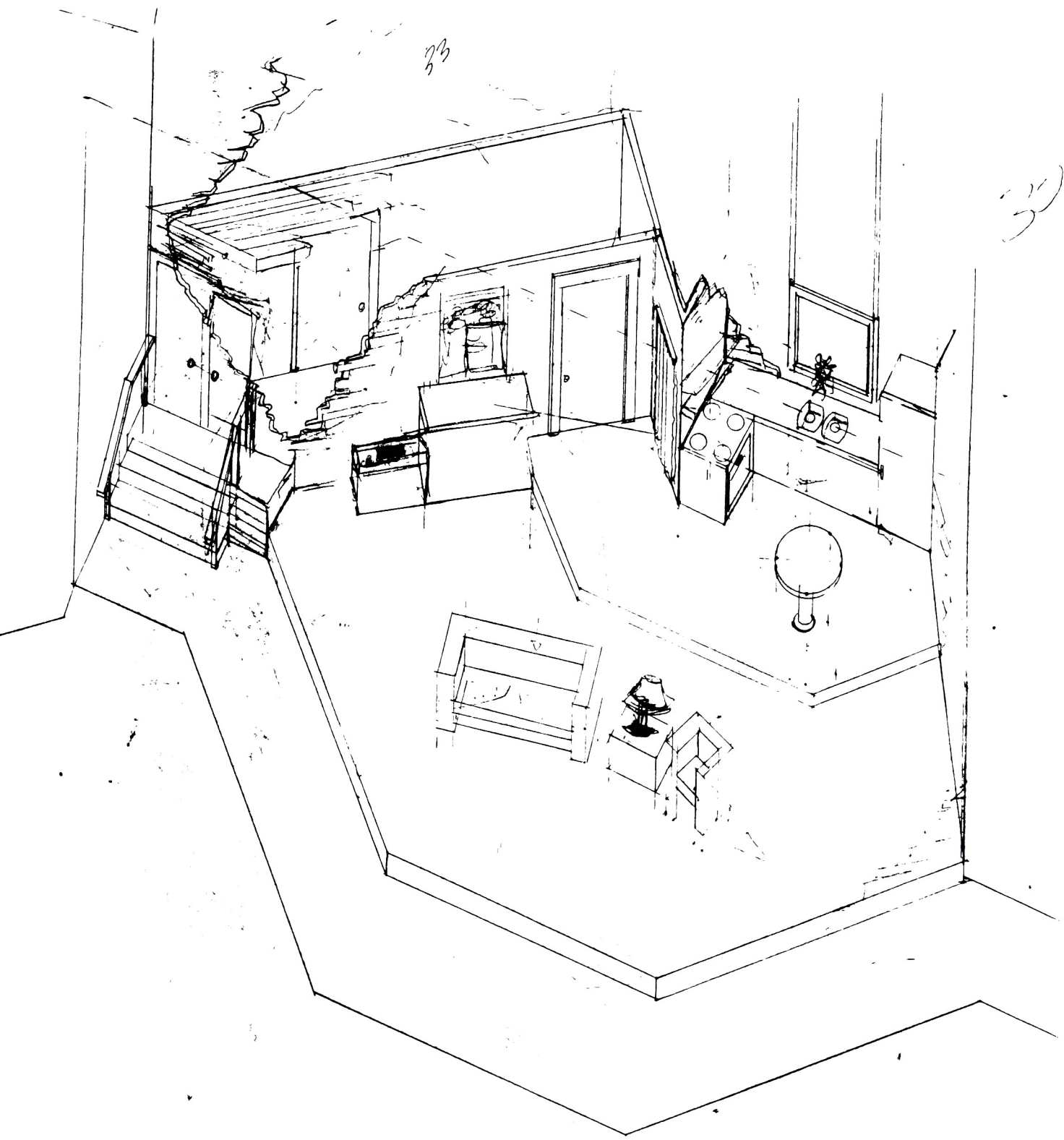
SKETCHES

A hand-drawn sketch of a room layout, possibly a kitchen or a small office. The drawing is oriented with a dashed line at the bottom representing a wall or boundary. On the left side, there is a small rectangular structure, possibly a sink or a counter, with a dashed line indicating its position. In the center, there is a small square area, possibly a stove or a small table. To the right of this, there is a larger rectangular area, possibly a counter or a table, with a dashed line indicating its position. On the far right, there is a vertical structure, possibly a door or a wall, with a dashed line indicating its position. Various handwritten notes and markings are scattered throughout the drawing, including "P. Butler" near the top right, "P. Butler" near the bottom right, and "P. Butler" near the top left. There are also some numbers and symbols, such as "12", "13", "14", "15", "16", "17", "18", "19", "20", "21", "22", "23", "24", "25", "26", "27", "28", "29", "30", "31", "32", "33", "34", "35", "36", "37", "38", "39", "40", "41", "42", "43", "44", "45", "46", "47", "48", "49", "50", "51", "52", "53", "54", "55", "56", "57", "58", "59", "60", "61", "62", "63", "64", "65", "66", "67", "68", "69", "70", "71", "72", "73", "74", "75", "76", "77", "78", "79", "80", "81", "82", "83", "84", "85", "86", "87", "88", "89", "90", "91", "92", "93", "94", "95", "96", "97", "98", "99", "100".



GE
Z
THE



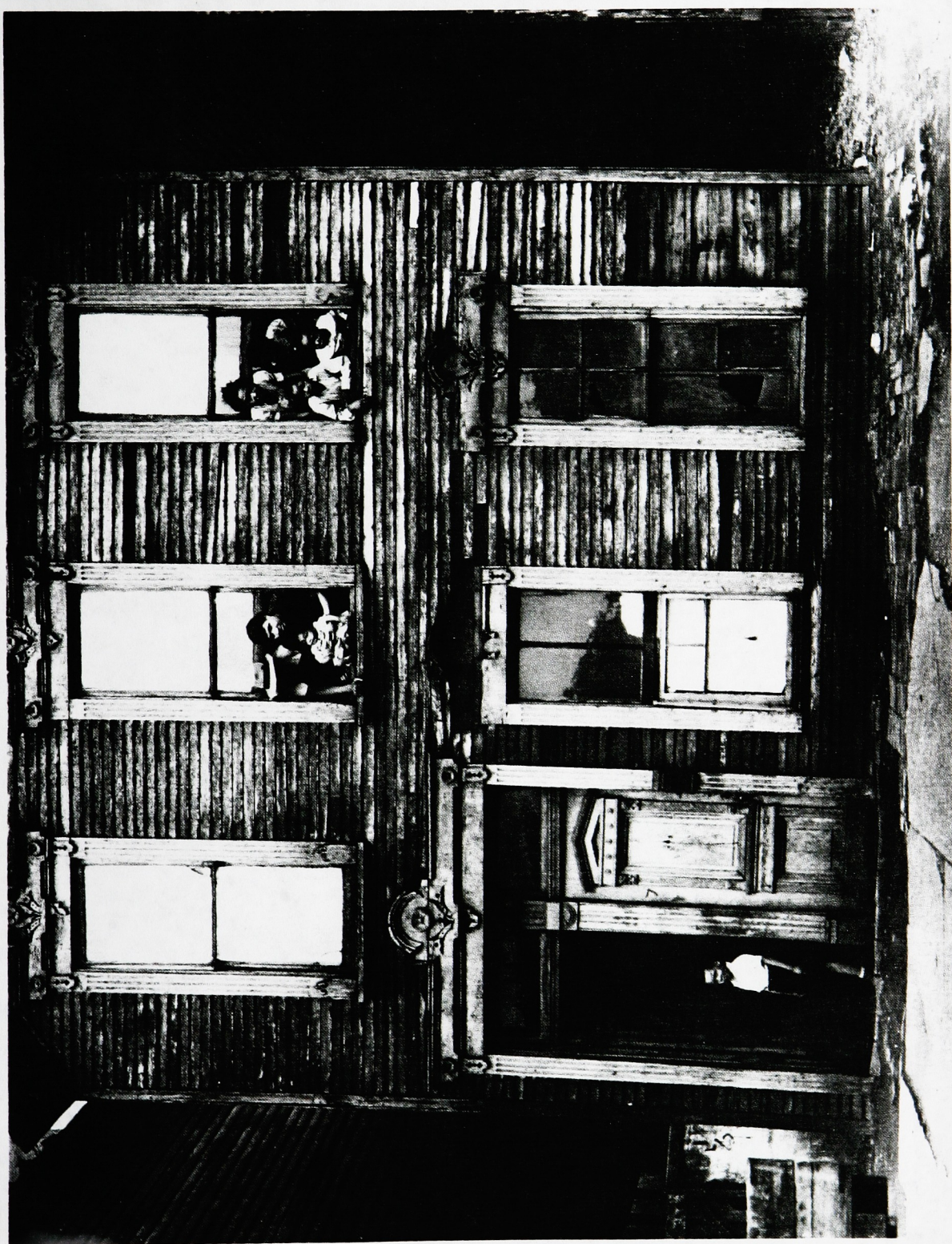


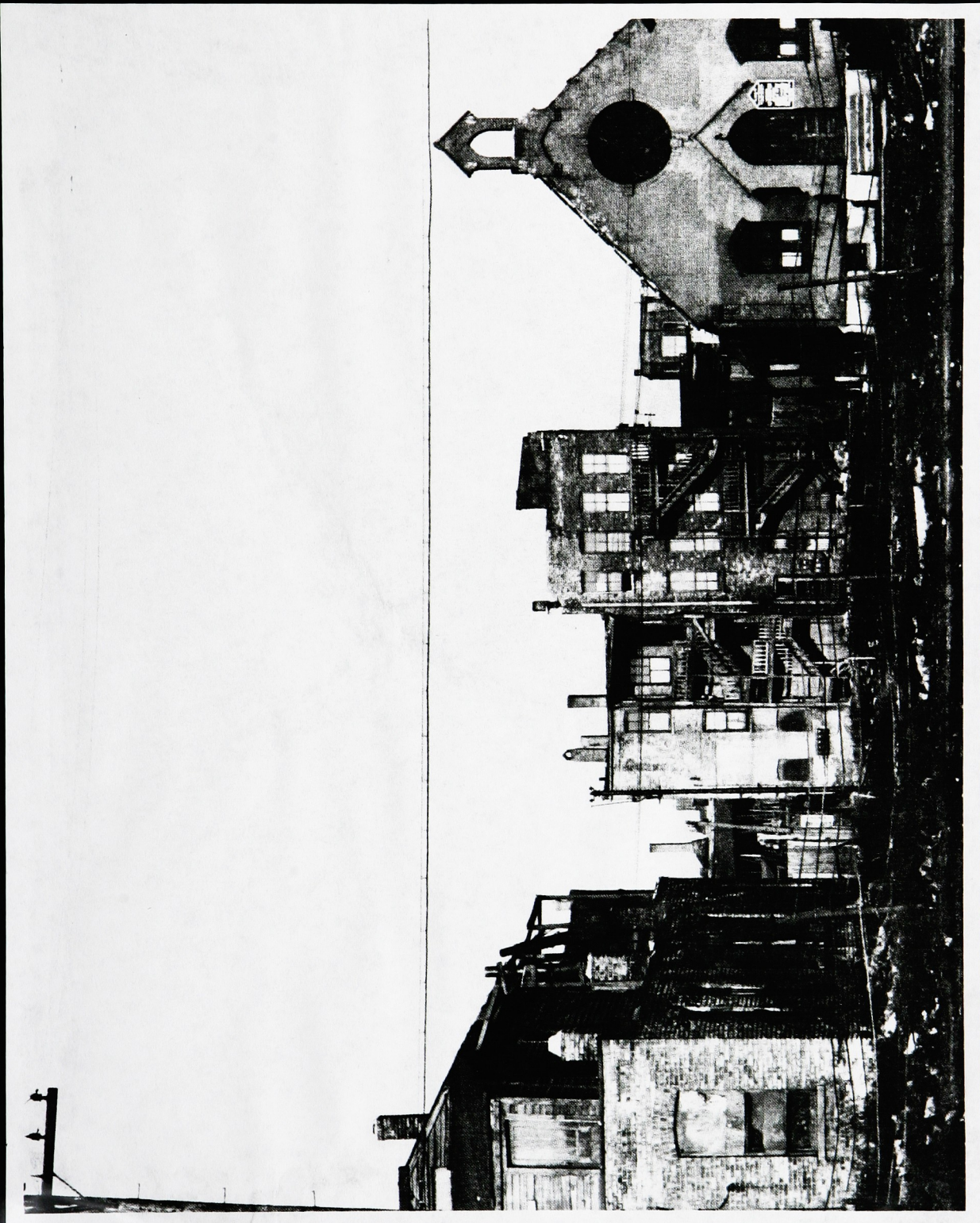
APPENDIX B

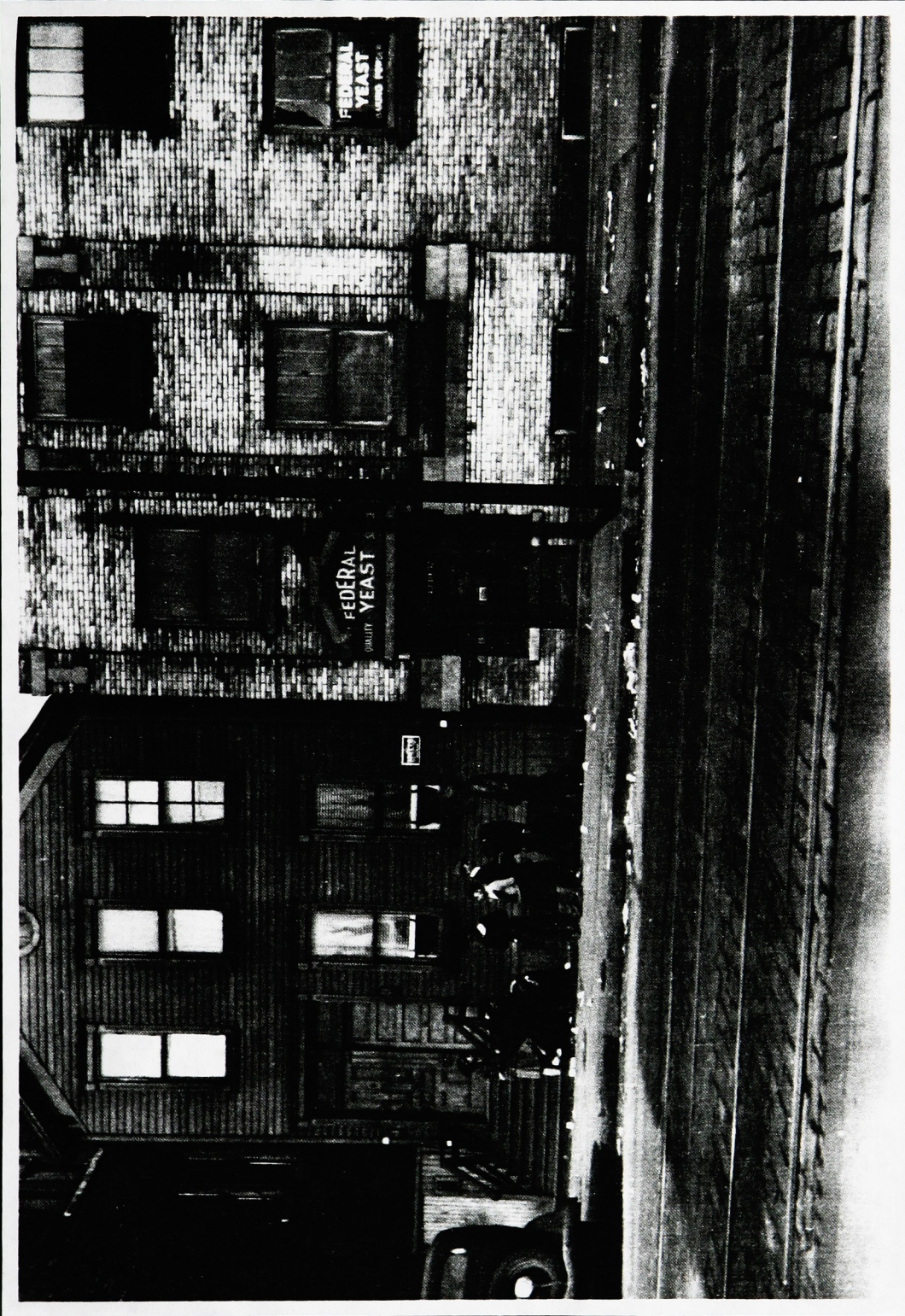
SOUTHSIDE CHICAGO IN THE 1950's











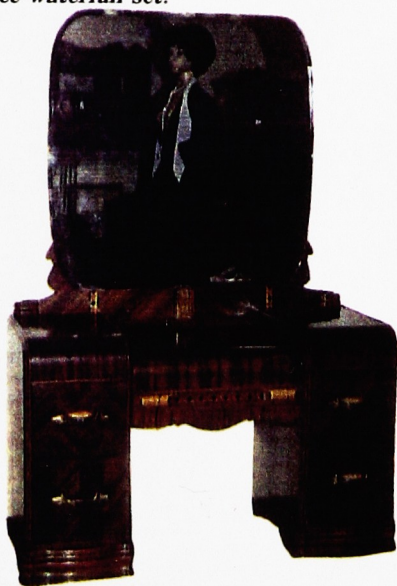
APPENDIX C

FURNITURE AND FINISHES FROM THE 1930's



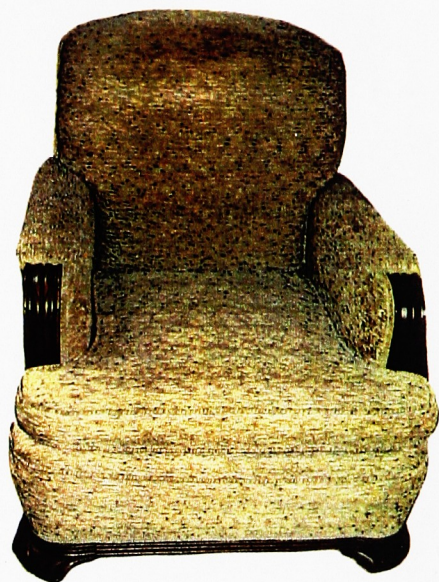
6

Dresser with matched Oriental walnut veneer on top and sides, diamond and V-matched Oriental walnut veneer on drawers and a banding of zebrano wood and marquetry separating the first two drawers, 44" wide, 20" deep, 71" high, late 1930s. Part of the five-piece waterfall set.



8

Vanity with matched Oriental walnut veneer on top and sides, diamond and V-matched Oriental walnut veneer on drawers and a banding of zebrano wood and marquetry above apron, 44" wide, 18" deep, 66" high, 1930s. Part of the five-piece waterfall set.



7

Upholstered arm chair with rolled and ribbed designed hardwood arms and feet, 31" arm to arm, 34" high, 1935. Part of two-piece set including davenport that is not pictured.



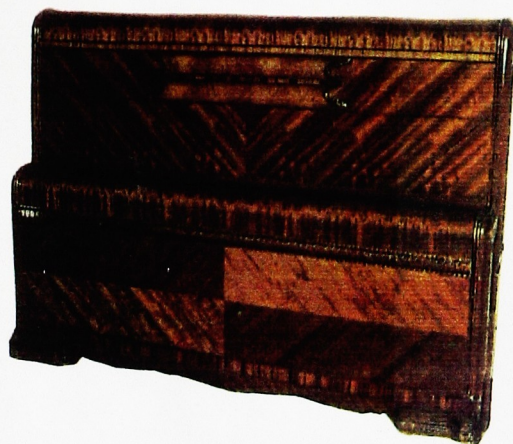
9

Arm chair with original mohair upholstery made by Kroehler, 35" arm to arm, 33" high, 1930s. Part of two-piece set including davenport bed.



10

Chiffonette with matched Oriental walnut veneer on top and sides, diamond and V-matched Oriental walnut veneer on door and drawers and a banding of zebrano wood and marquetry separating the first two drawers; the cabinet behind the door is cedar-lined, 36" wide, 20" deep, 62" high, late 1930s. Part of the five-piece waterfall set including bed, dresser, vanity and bench (not pictured).



11

Bed with diamond and V-matched zebrano wood panels, 41" high headboard, 24" high footboard, 1930s. Part of a two-piece waterfall set including dresser made by D. Bassett Manufacturing Company, (Bedroom Furniture) Bassett, Virginia.



12

Buffet with figured walnut veneer top and sides, V-matched Oriental veneer on bottom outside door and center panel, butt walnut veneer on two top drawers and outside of center drawers, maple veneer horizontal strips and veneerite (artificial) marquetry, 59" wide, 20" deep, 33" high, late 1930s. Part of a four-piece set including a side chair, a host chair and a table.



13

Dresser with quarter-sliced avodire on top and sides, diamond and V-matched zebrano wood veneer on outside doors and mirror frame and satinwood veneer overlay panels beneath mirror and on middle drawer, 46" wide, 18" deep, 71" high, 1930s. Part of a two-piece waterfall set including bed made by D. Bassett Manufacturing Company, (Bedroom Furniture) Bassett, Virginia.



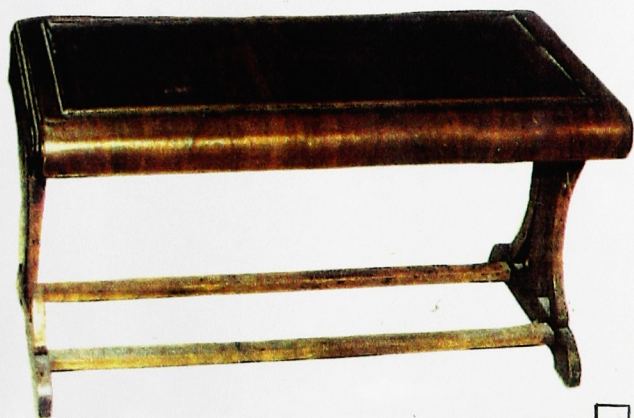
14

Oak extension table from a three-piece breakfast set including two side chairs, 43" wide, 30" deep, 30" high, 1930s.



15

A breakfast set including an oak extension table, 42" wide, 32" deep, 30" high and four oak side chairs, 35" high, 1930s.



16

Waterfall coffee or cocktail table with figured walnut veneer top and selected hardwood base, 32" wide, 17" deep, 18" high, late 1930s.



17

Occasional table made of selected hardwoods stained walnut, 15" square, 28" high, 1930s.



18

Waterfall occasional table with selected hardwood base and narrow mahogany veneer strip in the center of the top separating two figured walnut veneer panels, 26" wide, 14" deep, 24" high, early 1940s.



19

The Littl Boy Crosley radio with plain-sliced walnut veneer top and sides, figured walnut and maple veneers on front and selected hardwood frame, 21" wide, 12" deep, 35" high, middle 1930s.



20

Coronado floor model radio with figured walnut veneer case and selected hardwood decorations, 21" wide, 11" deep, 36" high, late 1930s. Chromium framed clock on onyx base, 10" wide, 4" deep, 10" high, made by Manning-Bowman.



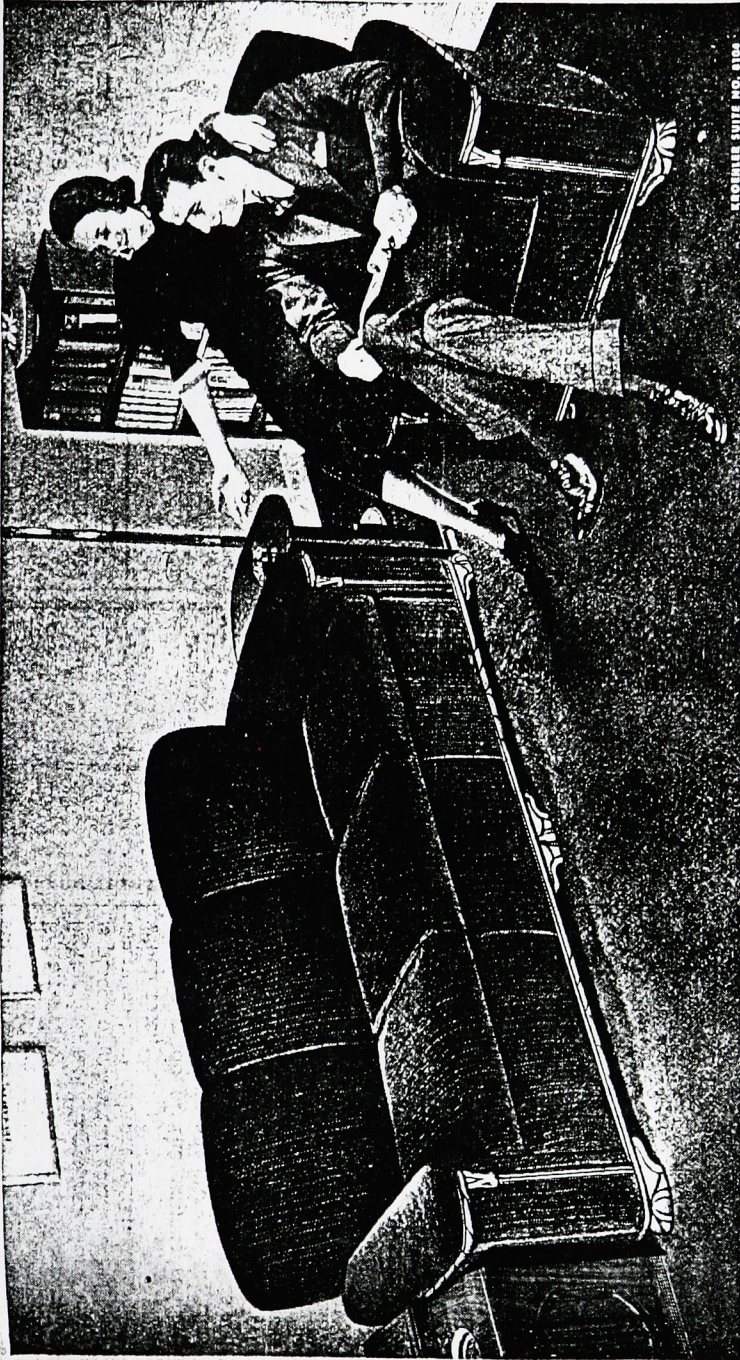
21

Majestic radio with plain-sliced walnut veneer top and sides, butt walnut veneer front and stiles and selected hardwood frame, 25" wide, 16" deep, 38" high, middle 1930s, made by Grigsby-Grunow. The clock is a Plymouth eight-day, 13" wide, 4" deep, 9" high, 1940s, made in Thomaston, Connecticut.



22

Sentinel sofa radio with plain-sliced walnut veneer and selected hardwood case, 21" wide, 13" deep, 21" high, late 1930s. A radio of this type was placed by the arm of a sofa.



LEONHARD SUITE NO. 8100

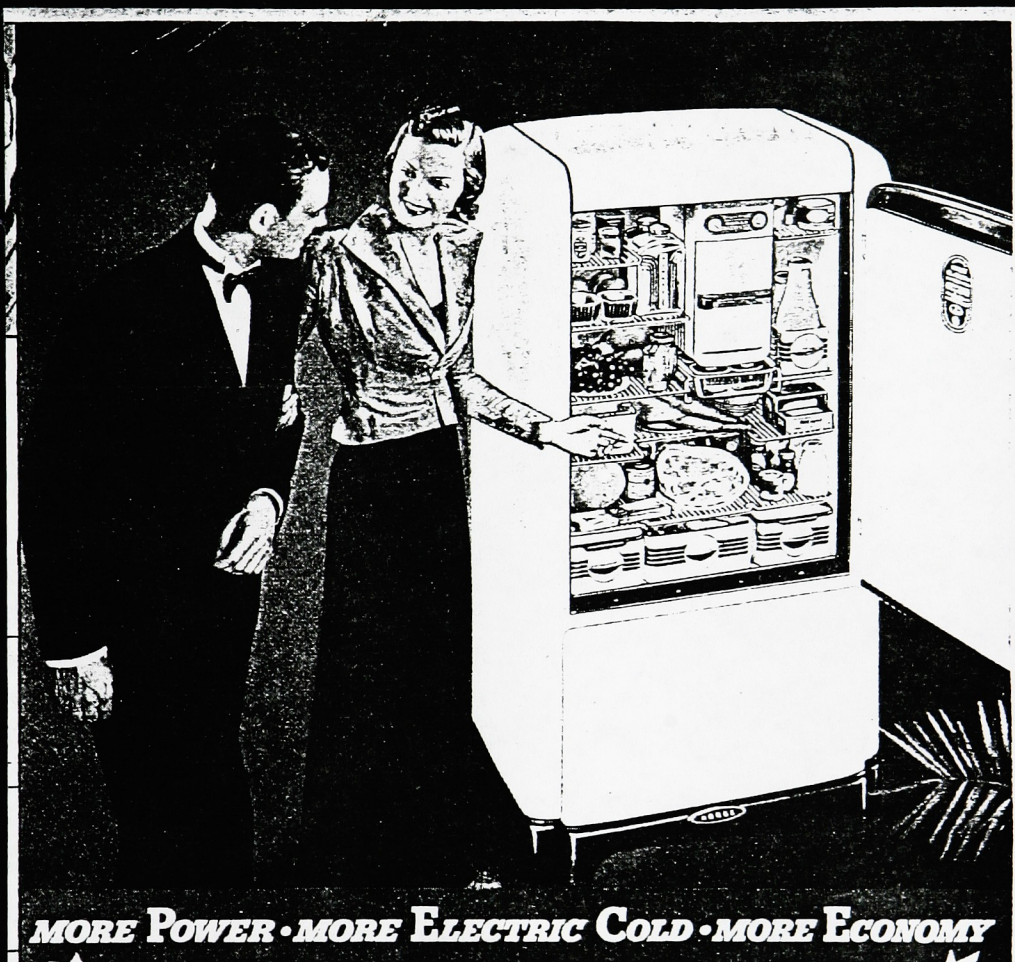


LOOK UNDER THE
CUSHIONS FOR THIS FAMOUS
GUIDE TO QUALITY

KROEHLER

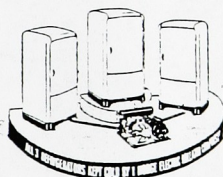
WORLD'S LARGEST FURNITURE MANUFACTURER



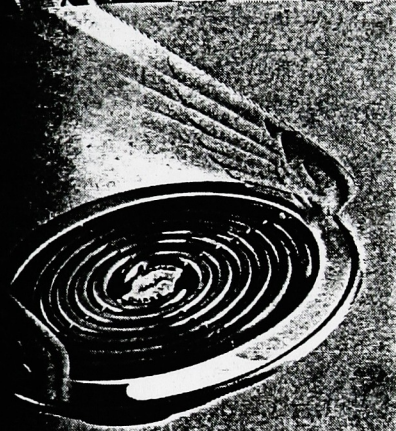


MORE POWER • MORE ELECTRIC COLD • MORE ECONOMY

"3 ON 1" TEST Proves the Smallest Norge
Rollator Cold-Making Unit Keeps Three Refrigerators Cold
... Yet Runs Only One-Third the Time in a 70° Room

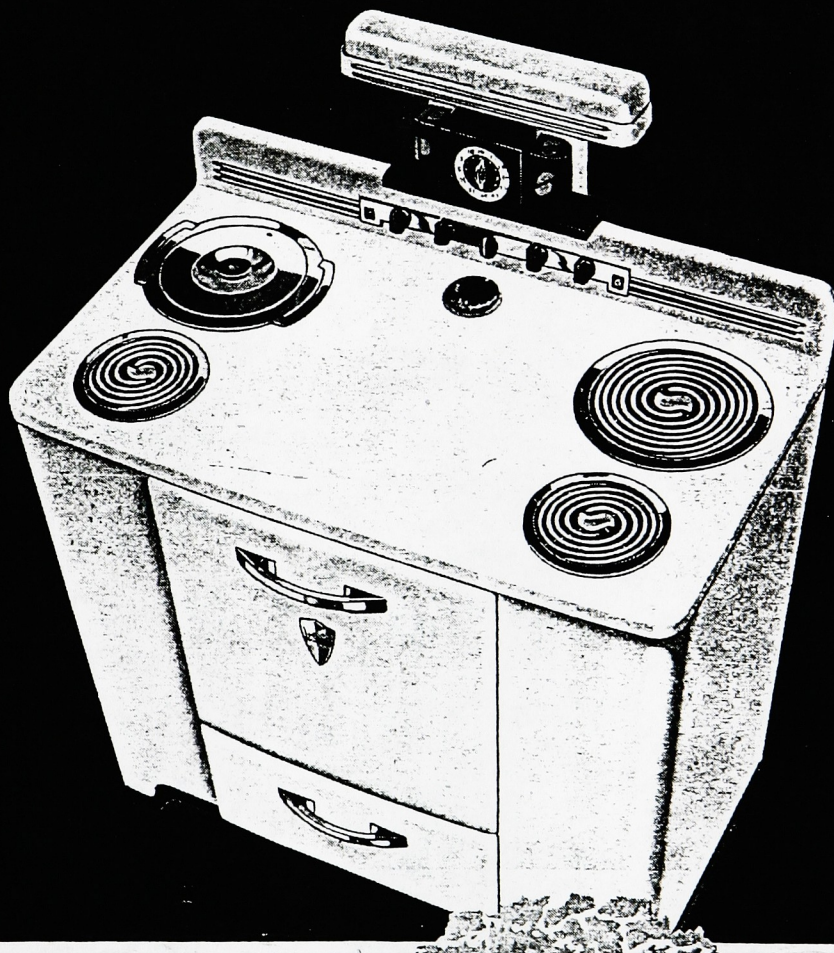



a Bee in SANTA'S BONNET




Calrod Hotpoint's patented, sealed, flat-top electric cooking unit has revolutionized electric cookery. It brought to it new speed, new cleanliness, new economy and longer life. Be sure the range you buy is a Hotpoint with Calrod cooking units. Then you'll have the last word in electric cookery!

The New Dorchester— (right) Hotpoint's beautiful built-to-the-floor Gift Special with three Hi-Speed Calrod units and Thrift Cooker; center control surface, condiment set, time clock, and new style lamp. All porcelain enamel or porcelain and chrome, trimmed with chromium.






more
carefree
hours



*with a
CranEfficient Kitchen*



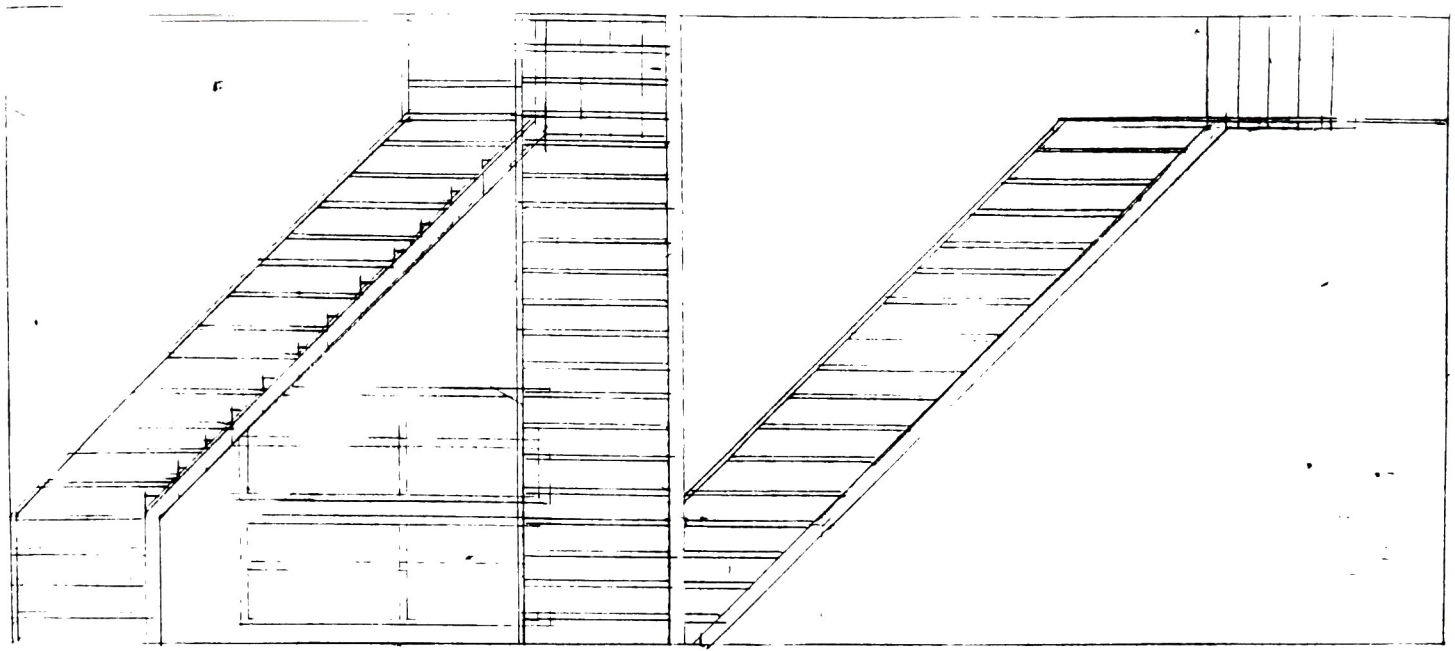
BEAUTIFUL *Elizabeth Reithberg*

world-famed soprano of
the Metropolitan Opera
Company shows her un-
erring taste in home dec-
oration when she says:

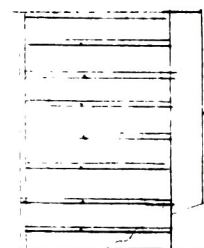
**"The 1938 Imperial papers
have rare beauty. To see them
is to want them."**

APPENDIX D

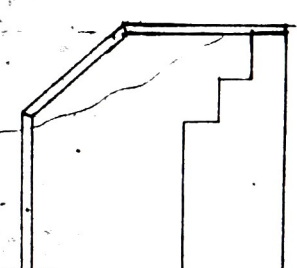
PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS



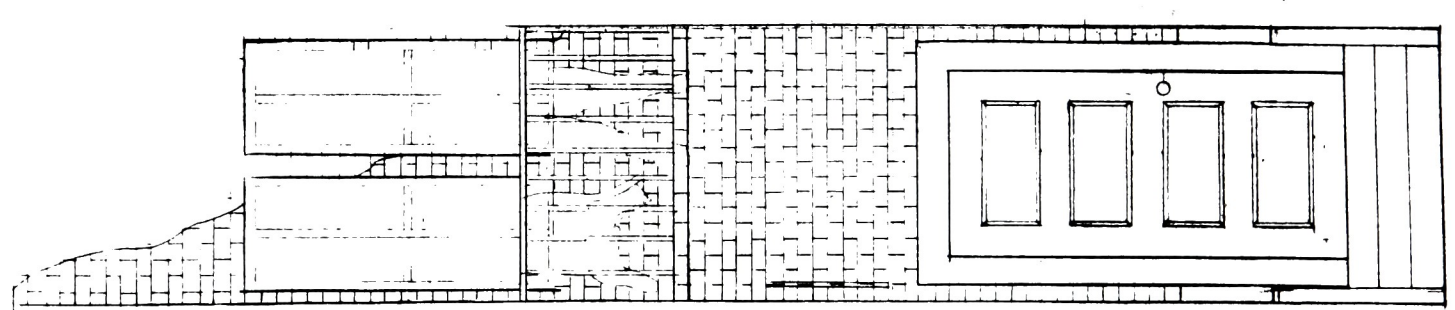
Handwritten note: "HALL REED A" and "FOR A.S.D.B." (likely Architectural Scale Drawing Board).



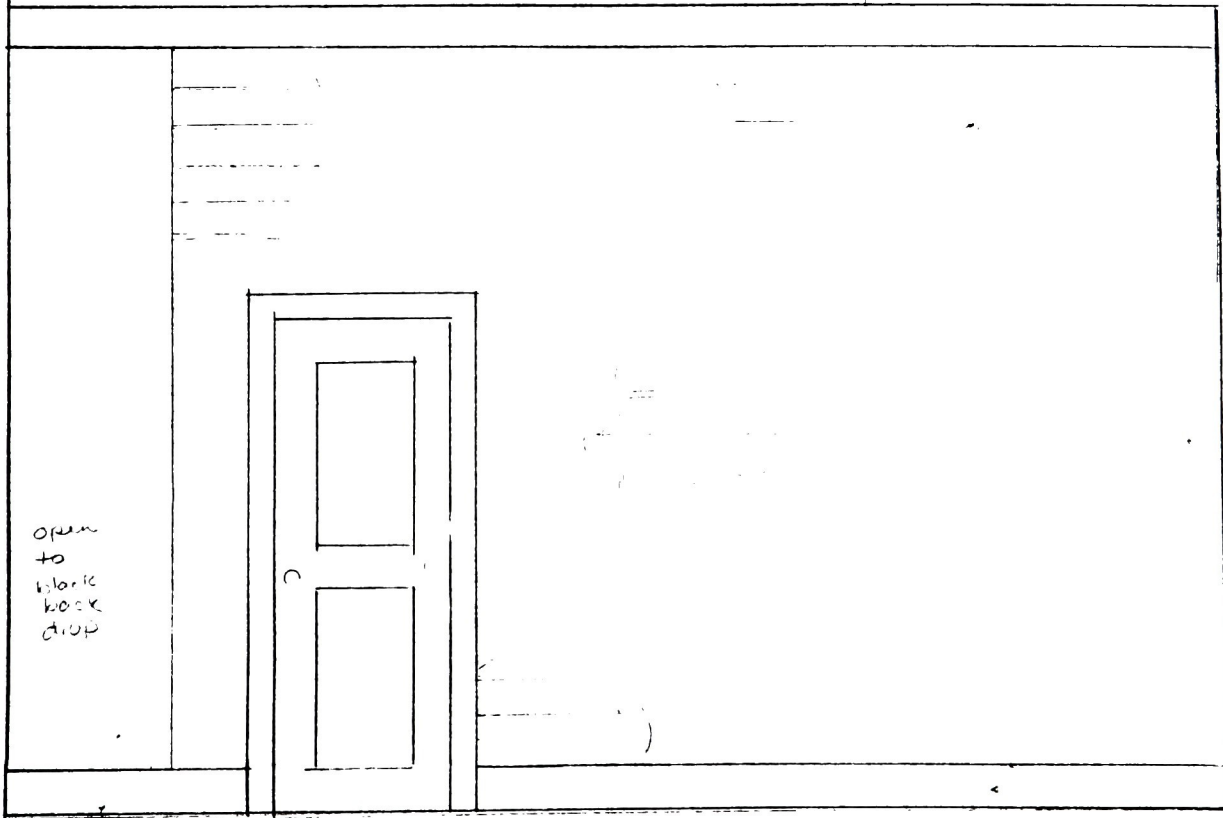
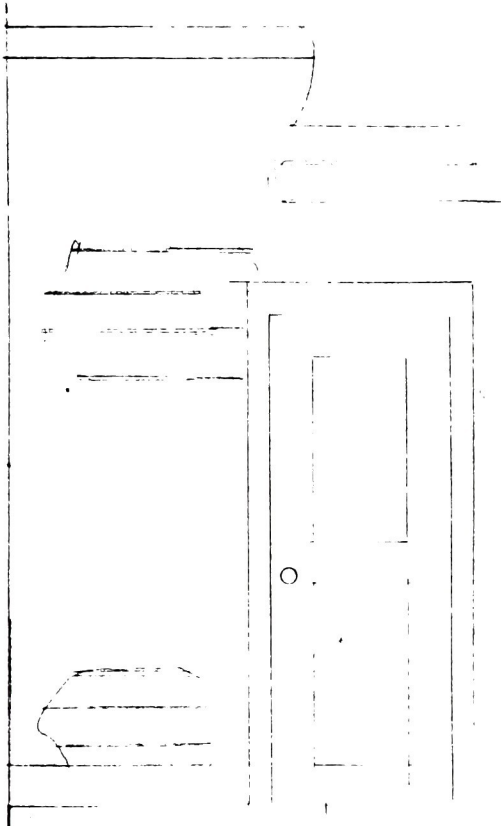
Handwritten note: "10/25/01" and "11:00 AM" (likely a date and time stamp).

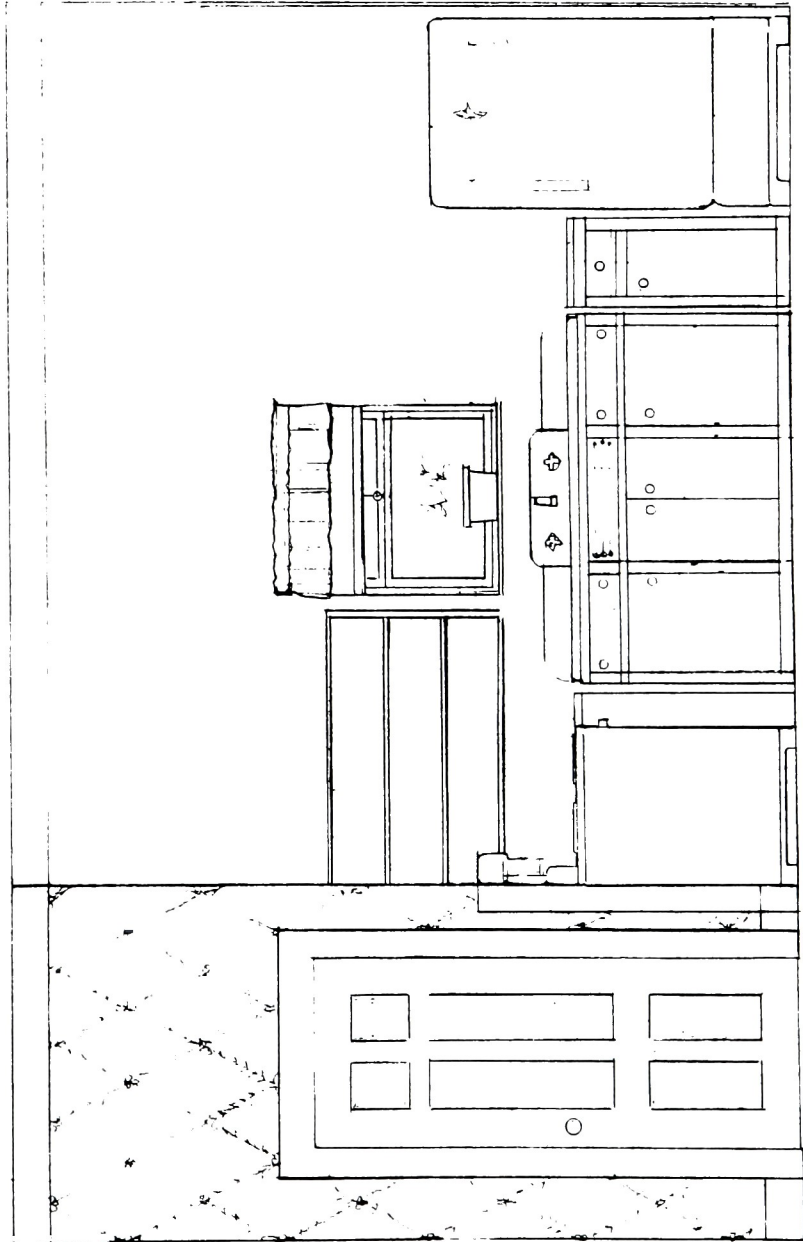
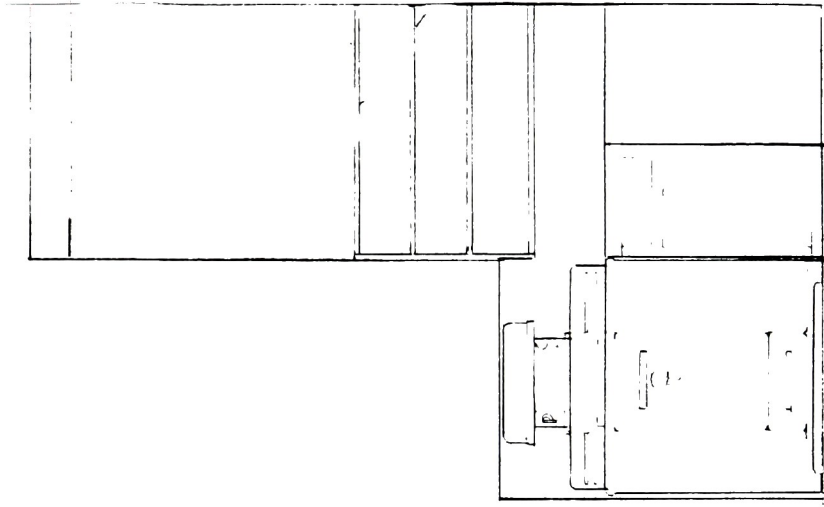


Handwritten note: "ARC" (likely a reference to an arc or curve in the drawing).

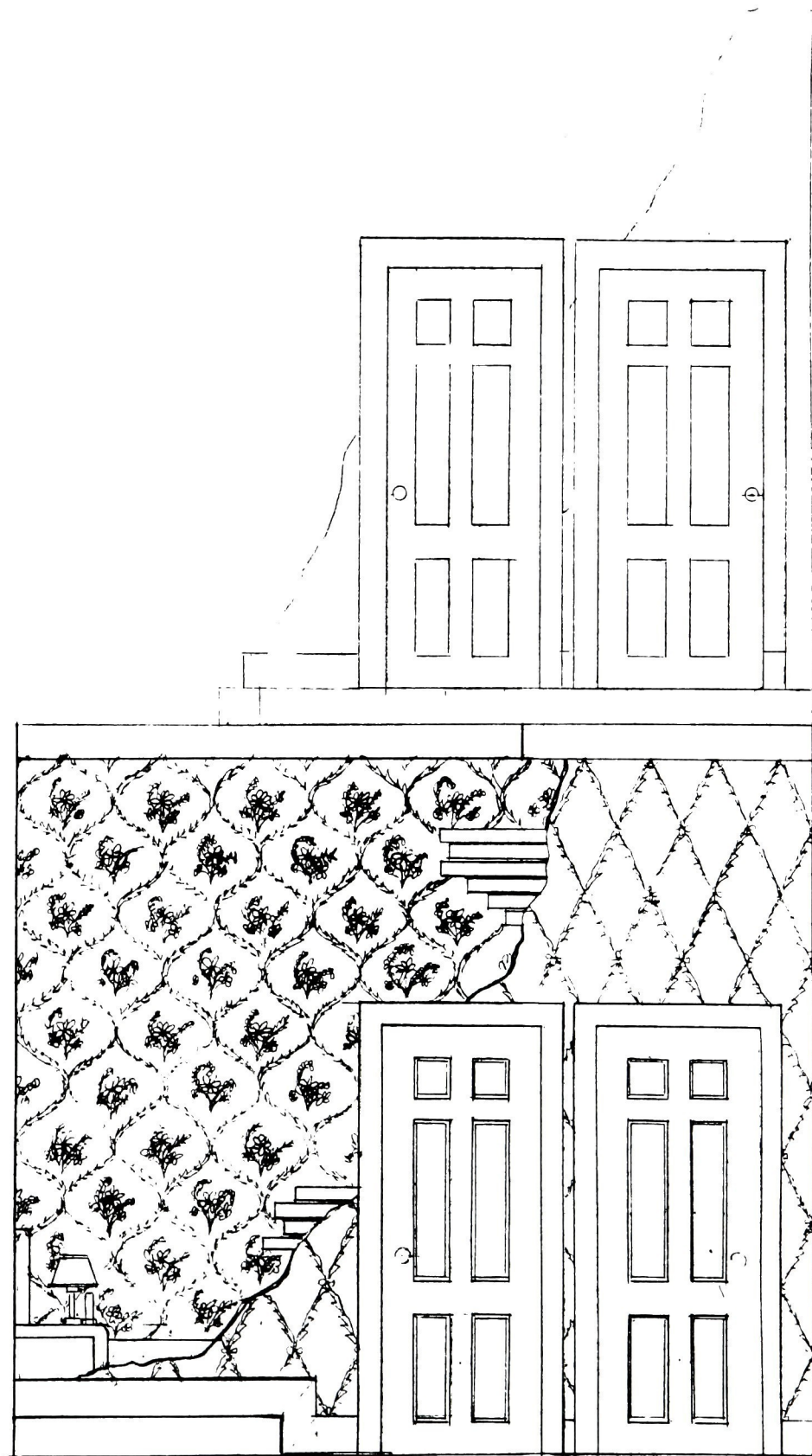


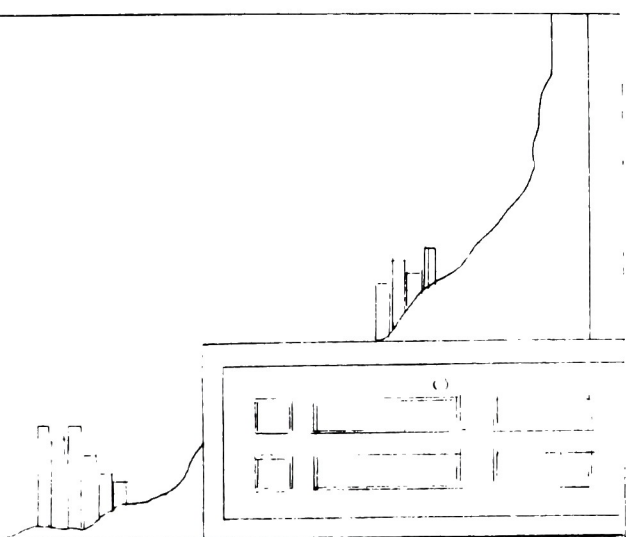
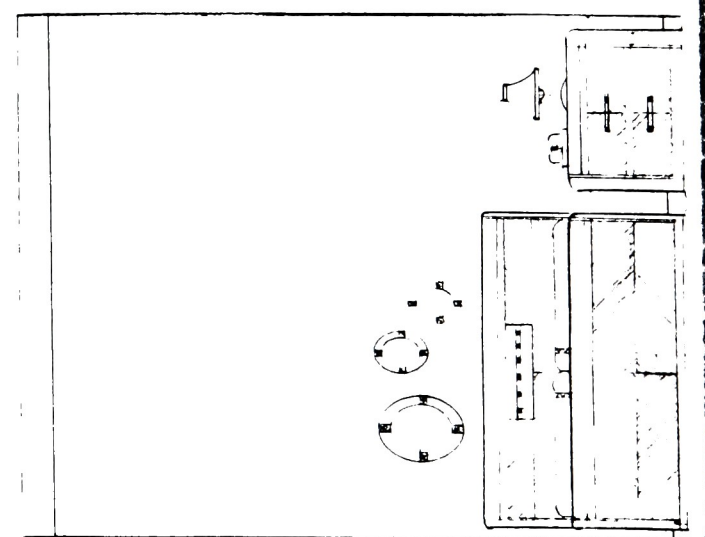
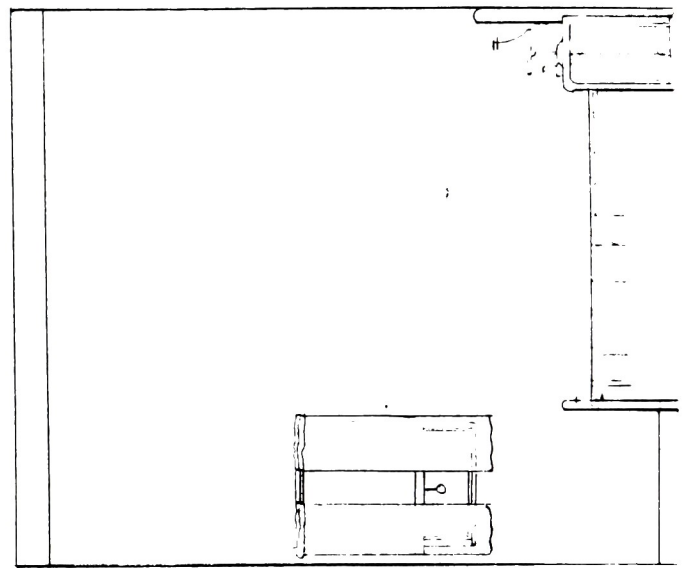
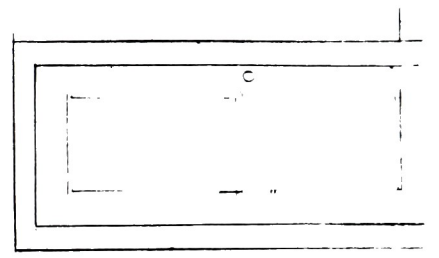
Handwritten note: "NO ALL BLACK" and "TOWER" (likely a reference to a tower or structure in the drawing).

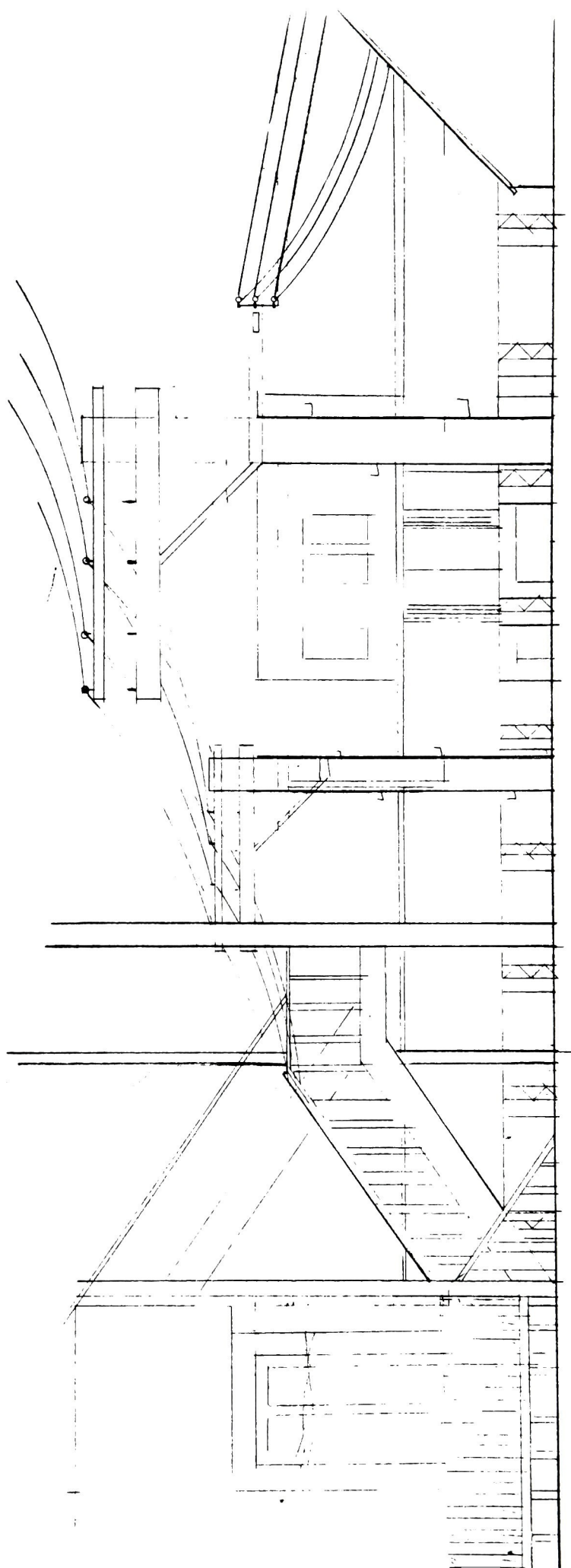




KITCHEN AREA
WALLS PAINTED
DROPPED BACKSPLASH







APPENDIX E

PROPERTY LIST

PROPERTY LIST

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Coffee | <i>Chicago Tribune</i> |
| Eggs (2 each performance) | 2 Kitchen Aprons |
| Toast (2 pieces each performance) | 6 each Plates, Cups, Saucers |
| Instant Oatmeal | 4 Face Towels |
| Butter | 2 Kitchen Towels, Holder |
| Bottle of Milk | 2 Sink Sponges |
| Box of Crackers | 1 can of Cleanser |
| Beer (3 bottles each performance) | Cut Glass Fruit Bowl |
| Salt, Pepper | 6 pieces of Wax Fruit |
| (Bread bag w/slices) | Lace Tablecloth |
| Coffee Pot | Alarm Clock |
| 3 Iron Skillets | 2 Toothbrushes |
| 2 Saucepans | Plastic Drinking Glass (1 each performance) |
| 2 Pot Holders | Soap in case |
| 6 each Knives, Forks, Spoons | Tube of Toothpaste |
| Sugar Bowl | Old Corn Broom |
| Salt and Pepper Shakers | Mop and Pail |
| Mixing Bowl | Carpet Sweeper |
| 3 Bowls | Can of Furniture Wax |
| Sewing Basket and Accessories | Dust Rag |
| School Books with Strap | Old Newspapers |
| 2 Textbooks | Low Vase with Artificial Flowers |
| 1 Looseleaf Book | Woman's Handbag with: |
| 1 Telephone | 1 Change Purse |
| 1 Laundry Basket (l filled) | Coins |
| Electric Iron | Pocket Comb |
| Ironing Board (no legs) | Cigarettes |
| Laundry Sprinkler | Lipstick |
| Dummy Foods for refrigerator | Matches |
| Woman's Hairbrush | \$1.00 Bill |
| Plant in Pot | Cardboard Box with: |
| Beer Can Opener | Ribbon |
| 2 Ashtrays | Tissue Paper |
| Three Shirts on Hangers | Envelope w/Card |
| 2 Records in Jackets | Hand Trowel |
| Envelope of Money | Hand Cultivator |
| 2 String Shopping Bags with Groceries | Hand Rake |
| 1 large Wooden Crate | Cardboard Box with: |
| 1 Old-Fashioned Trunk | Ribbon |
| 1 small Step Unit | Nigerian Costume |
| 1 Barrel | Phono Record in Jacket |
| 3 Cardboard Cartons | Boy's Toys |
| 2 Suitcases (old) | Broomstick |
| Pair of Window Curtains in Bag | Rubber Ball |
| Calling Cards (1 each performance) | Plastic Waste Basket |
| 2 Blankets | 6 Pair of Socks |
| 2 Pillows | Kitchen Matches |
| Legal Forms (1 each performance) | 2 Camera Cases |
| Punch Card Check (1 each performance) | Guitar Case |

Mailing Envelopes
 Typed List (1 each performance)
 Toaster
 Dustpan
 Breakable Glass (1 each performance)
 Shoulder Bag w/Lipstick
 Mug (Mama's)
 Pictures on walls
 2 Throw Pillows
 Rug under sofa
 2 Maracas
 Doilies (armchair, sofa)
 3 Ebony Magazines
 Hot Pads (stove, table)
 Notes and Recipes (on refrigerator)
 Lamp w/Shade (buffet)
 Lamp w/Shade (bedr. bureau)
 Calendar on front door⁸

Insect Spray Gun
 Grease Pencil
 Sticks and String for plant
 Hat Box
 Gardening Hat (large)
 Zippered Briefcase with Legal Papers, Pens
 Covered Butter Dish
 Sock Egg
 Slip of Paper with Address
 Paperbag with Ball Cord
 Curtains on window
 Stereo
 Standing Lamp by armchair
 Shaving Kit
 Standing Pictures (buffer, bureau)
 Mirror (inner closet door)
 Matches (Walter's pockets)

⁸ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 149-151.

APPENDIX F

COSTUME CONCEPTS

MAMA

Mama's costumes should appear simple and worn, but well taken care of. Her costumes should not be pretentious. Mama lived thru the depression era and finds no necessity in a materialistic image. This is not to say she doesn't care what she looks like, because she does. Her costumes need to support her image of strength, pride, and dignity. They should be dated from the early to mid 1940's. She hasn't bought anything new for some years, because her family's material needs have definitely come before hers.

COSTUME PLOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Housedress, Hose
 Half Apron
 Black Lace-up Shoes
 Simple Gold Earrings

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

Print Housedress
 Full Apron, Head Wrap
 (Repeat Shoes, Hose)

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

Light Coat, Hat
 Suit, Black Handbag
 Heels, Gloves, Hose
 Earrings
 Pearl and Gold Necklace

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

Print Dress, Slip
 Hat
 (Same Shoes, Earrings 1:1; Coat, Handbag, Hose 2:1)

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

Dressier Dress
 (Repeat Coat, Hat, Necklace, Hose, Slip, Earrings as 2:1)

ACT THREE

Same as 2:3

PERMANENT JEWELRY:

Wedding Ring⁹

⁹ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun. ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 152.



RUTH

Ruth has been forced to put other family members' needs first, and although she cares very deeply for them, there is a fire of resentment burning deep within her. Ruth's attitudes and values are very similar to Mama's. Her costumes should be dated from the late 1940' to early 1950's. Ruth's costumes should not be in style, because she feels a need to provide for her son. Ruth's costumes should be fairly simple and well taken care of.

COSTUME PLOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Nightgown, Robe

Slippers, Hairclips

During scene add: Half Apron

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

Suit, Blouse

Heels, Gloves

Hat, Handbag

Light Coat

Full Slip, Hose

Earrings

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

Linen Dress

Half-Apron (same as 1:1)

Flat Shoes

(Repeat Hose, Slip, Earrings)

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

"Shirt" Dress

Petticoat

(Repeat Apron, Flats, Hose, Earrings)

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

Dress (more attractive per her spirits)

Heels, Half-Apron

(Repeat Hose, Slip, Earrings)

ACT THREE

Same 2:2

During scene add: Coat, Bag (same as 1:2)

PERMANENT JEWELRY

Wedding Ring, Watch¹⁰

¹⁰ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 151.



DAY DRESSES c. 1945-46

small half-hat,
roll-bound edge

short gathered
bell-shaped sleeves

small roll-bound half-hat
trimmed with a rose and veil

high round neckline
frilled yoke and sleeves

covered buttons

C/F button fastening

bloused bodice
soft bow tie belt

sleeves cut in one
with the bodice

patch pockets

large leather
shoulder bag

← C/F seam

straight knee-length skirt

gathered skirt

wrist-length
gloves

small leather
handbag

Knitted wool dress with peter pan
collar, short sleeves, bloused bodice
and straight skirt, c. 1945

low-heeled leather
shoes, flat tongue

Cream cotton dress with decorative
yoke seam extended into short
sleeves, frill decoration, full
gathered skirt, c. 1946

shoes with bow
decoration, high
slender heels

BENEATHA

Beneatha is 20 years old with a strong motivation to be a doctor. She is youthful, spirited, righteous, independent, and confident. Her costumes should reflect this attitude. Although Beneatha cares about her family she has a different attitude from Mama and Ruth. It is important that Beneatha's costumes show the current styles of the 1950's. Her costumes will help identify that the play takes place in the 1950's, since the apartment is furnished in 1930's style.

COSTUME PLOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Red Flannel Nightgown

Hair Curlers

Knee Pads, Scuffs

In "bathroom" **lose** Knee Pads and Underdress White Blouse, with Peter Pan collar.

Locket

In "bedroom" change into:

Pleated skirt

Cardigan, Loafers

Black Knee Socks

During rest of scene add: Coat with hood, Scarf

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

Jeans

Man's Shirt, tied at waist

Scarf (as a face mask)

(Repeat Knee Socks, Loafers, Locket)

During scene add Raincoat

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

African Robes

Matching Headwrap

In "bedroom" change into:

Dress with jacket

Heels, Hose, Purse

Evening Coat

Pearls, Earrings

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

Evening Dress

Petticoat

(Repeat Heels, Locket, Hose, Coat, Purse, Earrings)

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

Cardigan

Blouse

(Repeat pleated Skirt, Knee Socks, Loafers, Locket)

ACT THREE

Same as 2:3

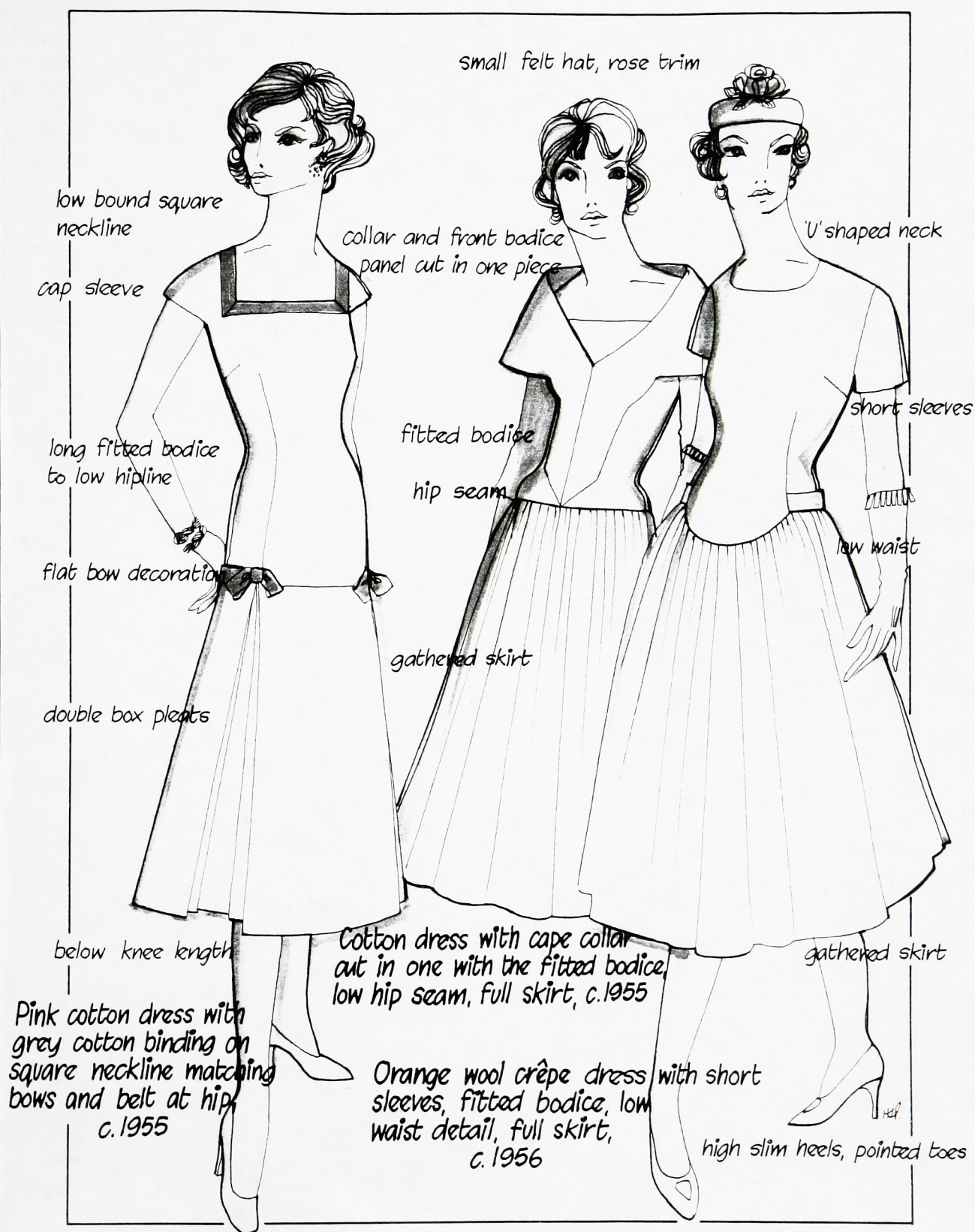
During Scene add Raincoat (same as 1:2)

IN SCENES 1:2, 2:2, 2:3 AND ACT 3

Wear Gold "Twist-O-Flex" Timex¹¹

¹¹ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 151-152.

DAY DRESSES c.1955-56





WALTER LEE

At the age of 30, Walter Lee has not yet realized what it takes to be a "man". He believes how much money one has determines ones happiness. Deep within himself, he carries the same pride and dignity as Mama, but we are not allowed to see this until the end of the play. I feel his costume should reflect these values. His hidden self-worth should be noted in his costumes by keeping his costumes simple and well taken care of. They should be dated from the late 1940's. One exception to his costumes will be his work clothes which will be in style, because he is a chauffeur for a rich man.

COSTUME PLOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Stocking Cap

Mismatched Pajamas

White T-Shirt, Slippers

In "bathroom" change into:

Black Pants, White Shirt,

Black Tie, Black Belt,

Black Socks

On stage add:

Black Chauffeur Jacket

Black Chauffeur Cap

Black Zip Boots

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

Golf Shirt, Slacks

Shoes, Belt, Socks

During scene add: Windbreaker, Hat

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

Same as 1:2

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

(Repeat Slacks, Shirt, Belt, Boots, Tie, Socks, as 1:1; hat 1:2)

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

Cardigan

Striped Tie

(Repeat Slacks, Shoes, Belt, Socks, Hat 1:2; Shirt 1:1)

ACT THREE

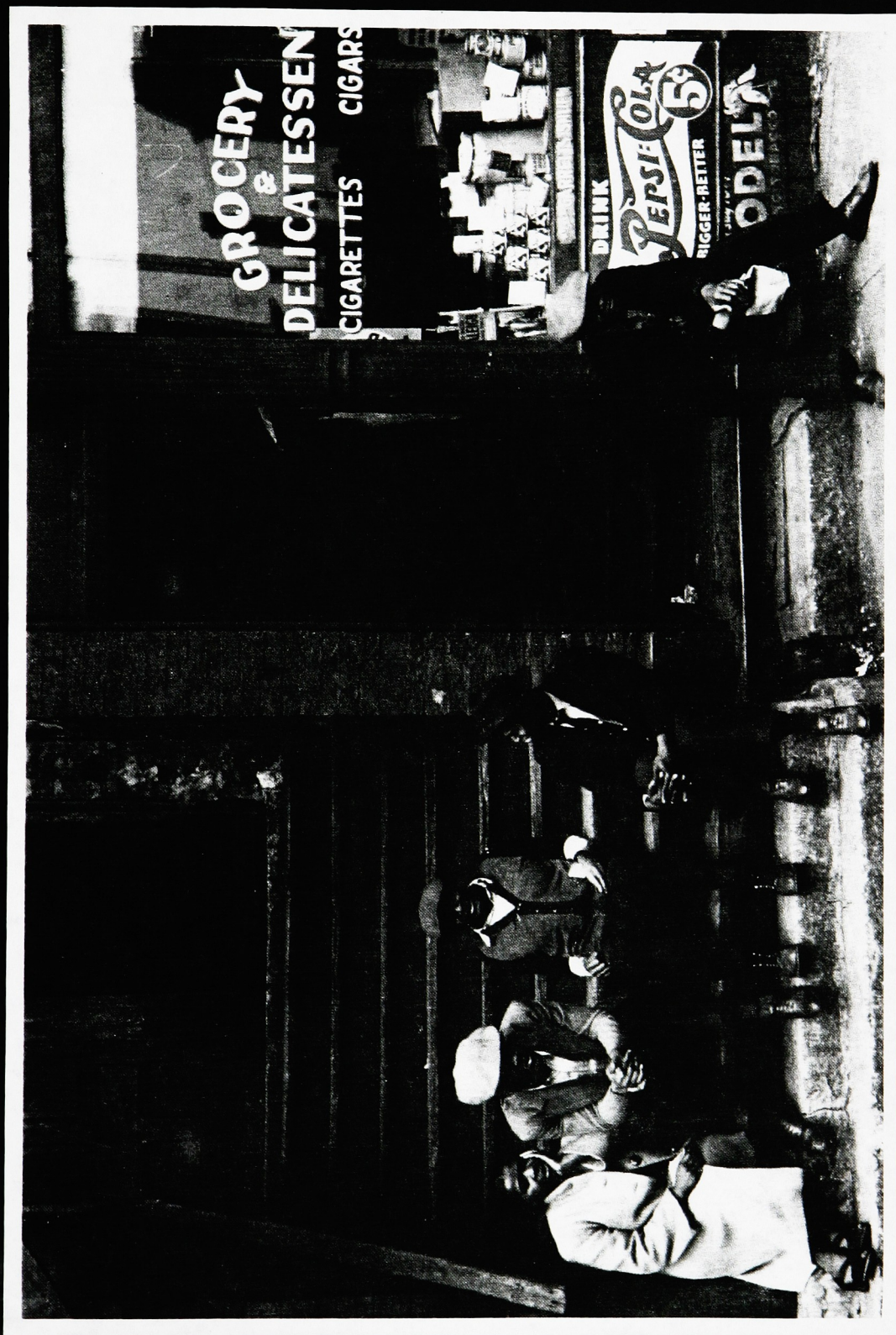
Same as 2:3

During scene add and lose Cardigan and add: Tweed Jacket

PERMANENT JEWELRY:

Wedding Ring, Watch¹²

¹² Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 153.



TRAVIS

Travis's costumes will be in style because he is a young and growing child. The costumes may look worn because they would be washed and worn many times, before they would be replaced. He respects his elders and has a special relationship with his grandmother, since she often spoils him. He is one of the reasons why everyone wants to succeed. They want to provide for the child. Most importantly the costumes should allow him to be carefree, to have fun, and to simply enjoy life.

COSTUME PLOT

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Pajamas, Slippers

In "bathroom," change into:

Pants, White Shirt,

Sweater Vest, T-Shirt

Socks, Shoes

Cloth Belt

On stage add: Bomber jacket, Baseball Cap

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

Jeans with rolled cuffs

Plaid Flannel Shirt

Black Belt

(Repeat socks, cap)

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

Same as 2:1

ACT TWO, SCENE 2

(Repeat Pajamas, Slippers 1:1)

ACT TWO, SCENE 3

Pants, Tie, Belt

"Ski" Sweater Vest

(Repeat Shirt, Shoes, Socks 1:1)

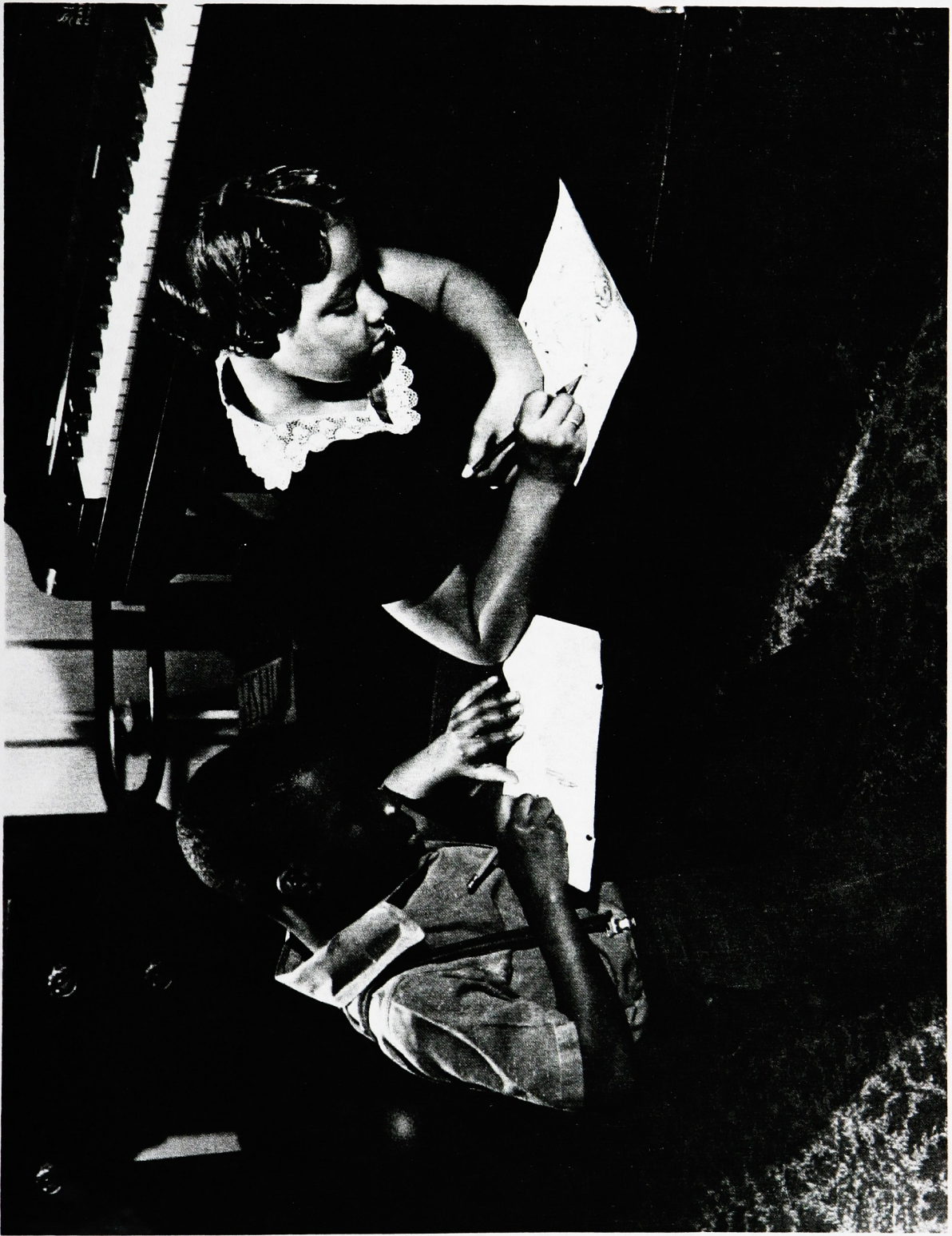
ACT THREE

Same as 2:3

During scene add: Corduroy Blazer ¹³

¹³ Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun, ed. Thirtieth Anniversary Edition, p. 153-154.





APPENDIX G

LIGHTING CONCEPT

Throughout the play, there will be light entering through the single window in the kitchen. Unless otherwise noted, the window will be lit brighter than anything else on stage. It is the major source of sunlight in this worn apartment. It is through this window that the outer world exists. Through this window is where the family's desires and dreams can be fulfilled.

The hallway should always be lit dimmer than any where else on stage, because it has no major significance

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

The morning is dark and the outside world should be lit as if it were dawn outside.

OPENING OF PLAY

The living room is dimly lit with an emphasis of light on Travis sleeping on the couch. The kitchen window has its shade pulled so no light will be shining through the window.

Walter Lee's and Ruth's bedroom should be lit brighter than the living room. The main emphasis of light should be on Ruth, because the play begins with her character.

As Ruth leaves the bedroom and enters the living room/kitchen area, the light in the bedroom will dim and the light in the living room/kitchen area will become the brightest lit area on stage.

As Ruth raises the kitchen window shade, the light through the

window will be lit slightly brighter than its surroundings.

The only light the hall has, at this time, is the light that spills over from the living room.

As Travis goes through the doorway and into the hall, the hall will be lit dimmer than the living room.

As Walter Lee sits upright, he should get showered with light. The bedroom light will become brighter.

After Walter Lee finally leaves the bedroom, it becomes dark, with the exception of the light spilling over from the living room/kitchen area.

As Travis enters into the hall on his way to school, the facade of the apartment building should become dimly lit. There should be just enough light so Travis can exit without tripping on the steps.

As Beneatha enters from her bedroom door, some very dim light should spill into the living room. This will help make it believable that a bedroom really exists there. In the set design, behind Mama's and Beneatha's bedroom door, there is no bedroom. It would have been a waste of stage footage to include one in the design, because no action occurs in this bedroom.

After Beneatha has finished in the bathroom and enters into the apartment, the hall should become dark, with the exception of the light spilling over from the living room/kitchen area.

On page 39, during the argument Mama and Beneatha are having about

God, the whole stage should be dimly lit, with the emphasis of light on Mama and Beneatha. The emphasis should be subtle, but noticeable. This is a very serious conversation and it should be dramatized with lighting.

When Mama exits to her bedroom, the emphasis of light should follow her. Then it should blend into the existing light of the living room. The lighting should return to where it was before Mama's and Ruth's argument.

The hall becomes lit again. The light in the hallway is still slightly dimmer than the other light on stage.

At the end of the scene the light will close in on Mama and Ruth. Ruth faints and the stage becomes dark.

CURTAIN

ACT ONE SCENE 2

Outside it is daytime and the entire stage should reflect that, including the exterior views. Today the check comes and the stage should be well lit to show the excitement.

As Asagai enters the living room and Mama and Ruth enter Ruth's bedroom, the bedroom light should dim.

On page 59, when Walter Lee enters the apartment, the stage should become dim except for the living room/kitchen area to show the anxiety, depression and doubt of Walter Lee's dream.

When Mama and Walter Lee begin their discussion the light of the

living room/kitchen area should begin to dim with a subtle emphasis of light on Mama and Walter Lee.

As the conversation gets more and more involved, the lighting on Mama and Walter Lee should get more dramatic.

When Ruth enters in from the bedroom, she should also become as emphasized by light as are Mama and Walter Lee.

Mama begins to speak and the lighting on Ruth and Walter Lee gradually dissipates. Mama should end up being lit the brightest. During this whole sequence of Mama's and Walter Lee's conversation, the lighting should never get as extreme as black and white. The lighting should be rather subtle because this conversation is simply a stepping stone to another conversation.

ACT TWO SCENE 1

Its later the same day and the lighting should be the same as in Act one Scene 2. Except the bedroom is dimly lit.

As Walter Lee and Beneatha begin their dance together there should be an emphases of light on them.

On page 67, Walter Lee becomes dramatically lit and Beneatha and Ruth are barely visible. Also at this point, the light through the window should be brighter than that on Ruth and Beneatha, but less than that on Walter Lee.

We must be able to see George enter into the building and hall, but it

must be very dim.

As Ruth answers the door the lighting returns to the way it was when this scene opened, including the light through the window.

On page 76, the stage lights dim subtly and an emphasis of light is put on Walter Lee and Ruth. The lighting must be obvious, because Ruth and Walter Lee are getting along, which has not happened for a while.

As they move the light follows them.

The hall must be lit well enough to see Mama enter.

As she enters the lighting returns to the way it was in the opening of this scene.

ACT TWO SCENE 2

Outside is dark. It's nighttime. The street light and the light over the door of the building should be on.

Because it is nighttime, the window will not be lit brighter than the action occurring inside the apartment.

The windows in the buildings, representing southside Chicago, should be lit to appear as if someone has their lights on inside.

The interior lighting of the Younger apartment is lit brightly throughout.

On page 91, light is going black as it closes in on Walter Lee and Travis.

ACT TWO SCENE 3

It's daytime and the lighting should be the brightest it ever was, similar to the opening of Act one Scene 2. It's moving day everyone is happy and the lighting should reflect their joy.

On page 111, Bobo exits and Mama and Walter Lee are emphasized by light, as the rest of the stage dims to blackness.

The emphasis of light on Walter Lee decreases and he is only lit when he is near Mama. This is the most dramatic scene for Mama's character.

Also at this time, all hope has left the apartment and the kitchen window should not carry any significance.

Mama should be emphasized by light, as clearly as night and day. Any action by other characters should be done in very dim lighting.

ACT THREE

It's still daytime, but the apartment should appear dimmer than the opening of Act two scene 3. Depression has entered the hearts of all the characters. The kitchen window is dimly lit with no hope.

Walter Lee is lying in bed and should be noticeable. The bedroom needs to be lit fairly well.

On page 130, the lighting should put emphasis on Walter Lee and Mr. Lindner. The lighting should become gradually dimmer on everyone but Walter Lee. This is Walter Lee's time to grow and become a "man".

At this point, the kitchen gradually regains its significance and the light through the window becomes brighter.

Towards the end of Walter Lee's conversation with Lindner, Walter Lee should be dramatically lit, but never to the extreme that Mama was during the closing of Act two Scene 3.

As Lindner leaves, the lighting becomes as it was during the opening of Act two Scene 3.

As the lights go down an emphasis of light remains on Mama, the window and her plant. Eventually just the window will be lit as the rest of the stage is in darkness at the closing of the scene.

APPENDIX H

BUDGET

BUDGET

PLATE 1

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Price/Item</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1" x 3" x 8'-0" | 88 | \$3.09 | \$271.92 |
| 1" x 4" x 8'-0" | 5 | 4.59 | 22.95 |
| 1" x 6" x 8'-0" | 26 | 8.15 | 211.90 |
| 1" x 9" x 8'-0" | 8 | 10.59 | 84.72 |
| 1/4" Luan (4'x8') | 28 | 7.00/sheet | 196.00 |
| Wallpaper | 7 rolls | 30.00/roll | 210.00 |
| Paint | 1 gal. | 20.00/gal. | 20.00 |
| Base | 61 l.f. | 0.47/l.f. | 28.67 |
| Door Moulding | 94 l.f. | 0.37/l.f. | 34.71 |
| | Total | | \$1080.87 |

PLATE 2

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Price/Item</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1" x 3" x 8'-0" | 73 | \$3.09 | \$225.57 |
| 1" x 4" x 8'-0" | 7 | 4.59 | 32.14 |
| 1" x 6" x 8'-0" | 13 | 8.15 | 105.95 |
| 1" x 9" x 8'-0" | 6 | 10.59 | 63.54 |
| 1/4" Luan (4'x8') | 26 | 7.00/sheet | 182.00 |
| Wallpaper | 11 rolls | 30.00/roll | 330.00 |
| Paint | 1 gal. | 20.00/gal. | 20.00 |
| Base | 42 l.f. | 0.47/l.f. | 19.74 |
| Door Moulding | 41 l.f. | 0.37/l.f. | 15.17 |
| Window Moulding | 31 l.f. | 0.37/l.f. | 11.47 |
| 1/8" Plexiglass (6'x8') | 1/3 sheet | 86.40/sheet | 86.40 |
| | Total | | \$1091.98 |

PLATE 3

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Price/Item</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1" x 3" x 8'-0" | 101 | \$3.09 | \$312.09 |
| 1" x 4" x 8'-0" | 2 | 4.59 | 3.18 |
| 1" x 6" x 8'-0" | 6 | 8.15 | 48.90 |
| 1" x 9" x 8'-0" | 6 | 10.59 | 63.54 |
| 1/4" Luan (4'x8') | 18 | 7.00/sheet | 126.00 |
| Door Moulding | 18 l.f. | 0.37/l.f. | 6.66 |
| 1/8" Plexiglass (6'x8') | 2 | 86.40/sheet | 172.80 |
| Styrofoam | | | |
| 4" x 2'-0" x 8'-0" | 2 | 11.98/sheet | 23.96 |
| 2" x 2'-0" x 8'-0" | 2 | 5.99/sheet | 11.98 |
| Brick (6'x12') | 9 | 25.00/sheet | 225.00 |
| | Total | | \$994.11 |

PLATE 4

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Price/Item</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1" x 6" x 8'-0" | 194 | \$8.15 | \$1581.10 |
| Floor Wax | 3 bottles | 12.00/bottle | 36.00 |
| Homosote (4'x8') | 10 sheets | 15.99/sheet | 159.90 |
| 1/4" Plywood (4'x8') | 1 | 11.99/sheet | 11.99 |
| 5/8" Plywood (4'x8') | 11 | 13.99/sheet | 15.89 |
| Linoleum | 260 sq.ft. | 0.70/sq.ft. | <u>182.00</u> |
| | | Total | \$1986.88 |

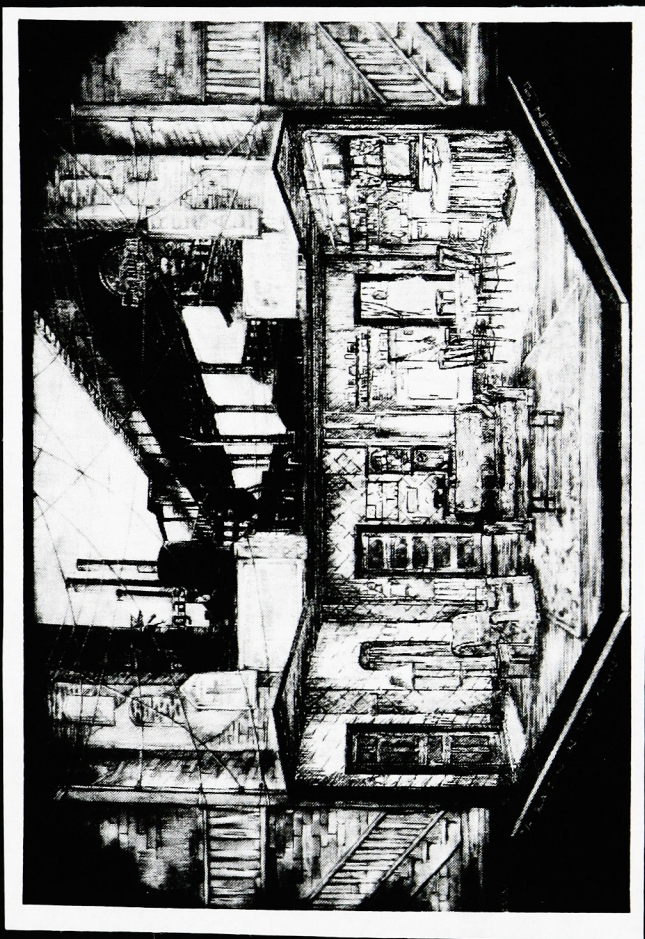
PLATE 5

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Price/Item</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1" x 2" x 8'-0" | 1 | \$2.29 | \$2.29 |
| 1" x 3" x 8'-0" | 118 | 3.09 | 364.62 |
| 1" x 4" x 8'-0" | 25 | 4.59 | 114.75 |
| 1" x 5" x 6'-0" | 1 | 5.49 | 5.49 |
| 1" x 6" x 8'-0" | 5 | 8.15 | 40.75 |
| 1" x 1'-0" x 8'-0" | 3 | 20.00 | 60.00 |
| 2" x 4" x 8'-0" | 14 | 3.00 | 42.00 |
| 1/4" Luan (4'x8') | 28 | 7.00/sheet | 196.00 |
| Paint | 1 gal. | 20.00/gal. | 20.00 |
| Window Moulding | 30 l.f. | 0.37/l.f. | 11.10 |
| 1/8" Plexiglass (6'x8') | 2sheets | 86.40/sheet | 172.80 |
| Styrofoam | | | |
| 4" x 2'-0" x 8'-0" | 7 | 11.98/sheet | 83.86 |
| 2" x 2'-0" x 8'-0" | 7 | 5.99/sheet | 41.93 |
| Brick (6'x12') | 4 | 25.00/sheet | 100.00 |
| 1/4" Plywood (4'x8') | 4 | 11.99/sheet | 47.96 |
| Columns | | | |
| 3" x 3" x 12'-0" | 4 | 60.00 each | 240.00 |
| 1'-0" diam. x 22'-0" | 1 | 400.00 each | 400.00 |
| 6" diam. x 19'-0" | 1 | 190.00 each | 190.00 |
| Backdrop | | 1000.00 | <u>1000.00</u> |
| | | Total | \$3133.55 |

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| PLATE 1 | | \$1080.87 |
| PLATE 2 | | \$1091.98 |
| PLATE 3 | | \$ 994.11 |
| PLATE 4 | | \$1986.88 |
| PLATE 5 | | \$3133.55 |
| HARDWARE | | <u>\$200.00</u> |
| | TOTAL | \$8487.39 |
| +10% CONTINGENCY | | <u>848.74</u> |
| | GRAND TOTAL | \$9336.13 |

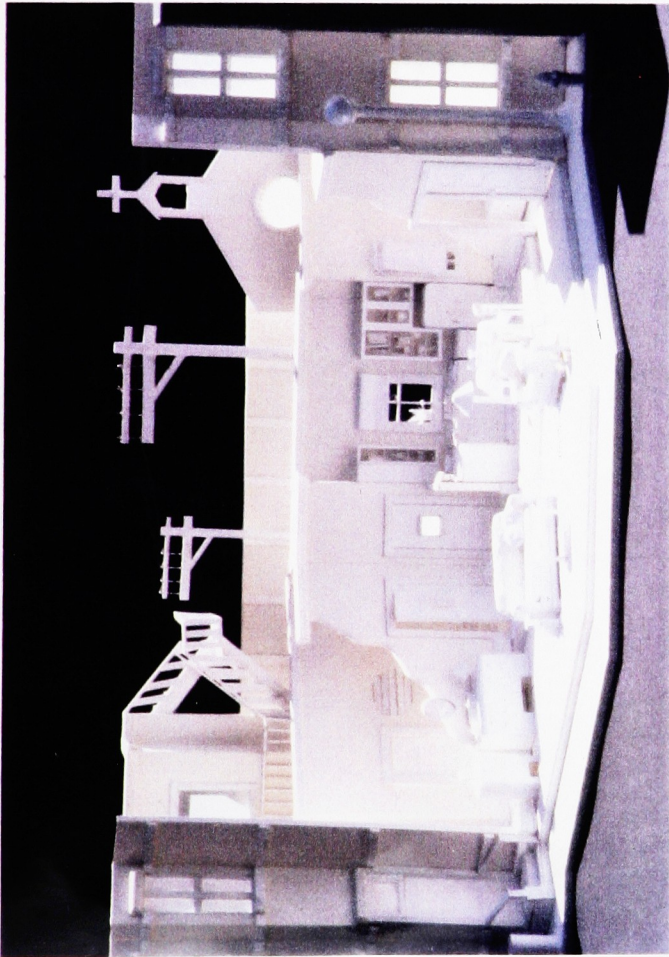
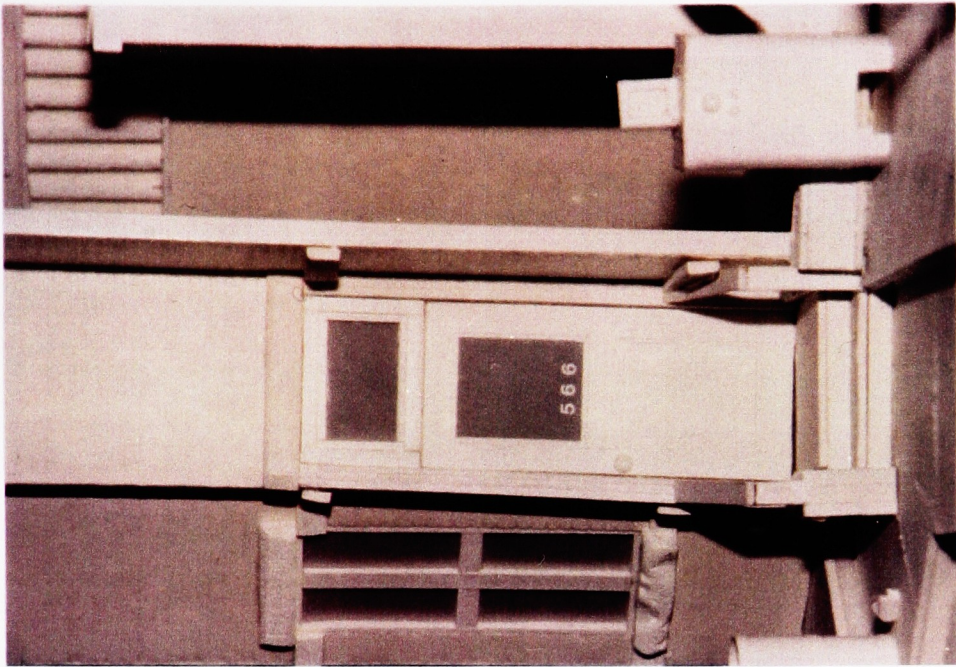
APPENDIX I

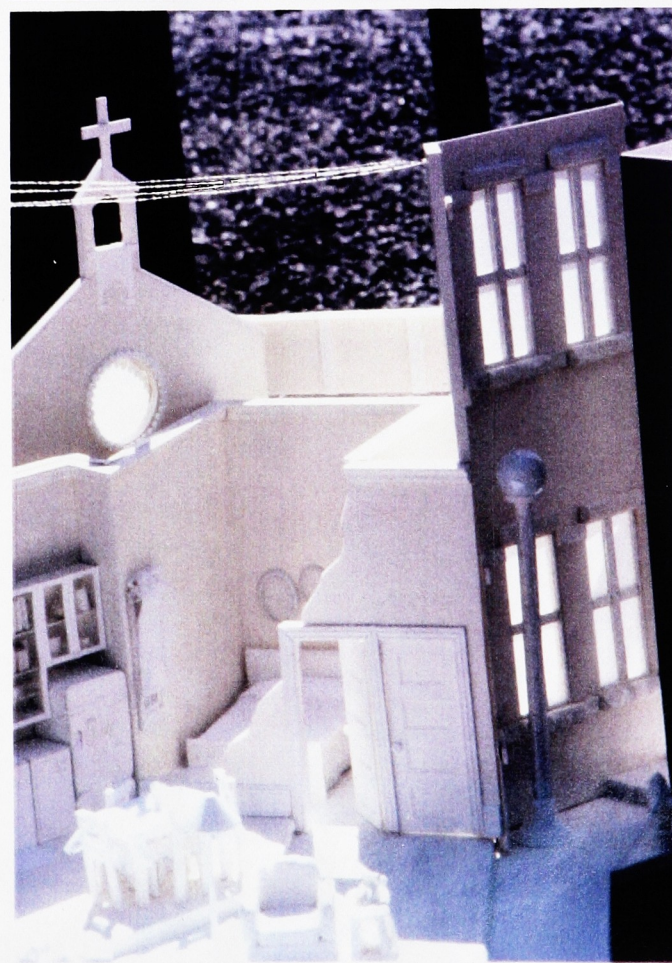
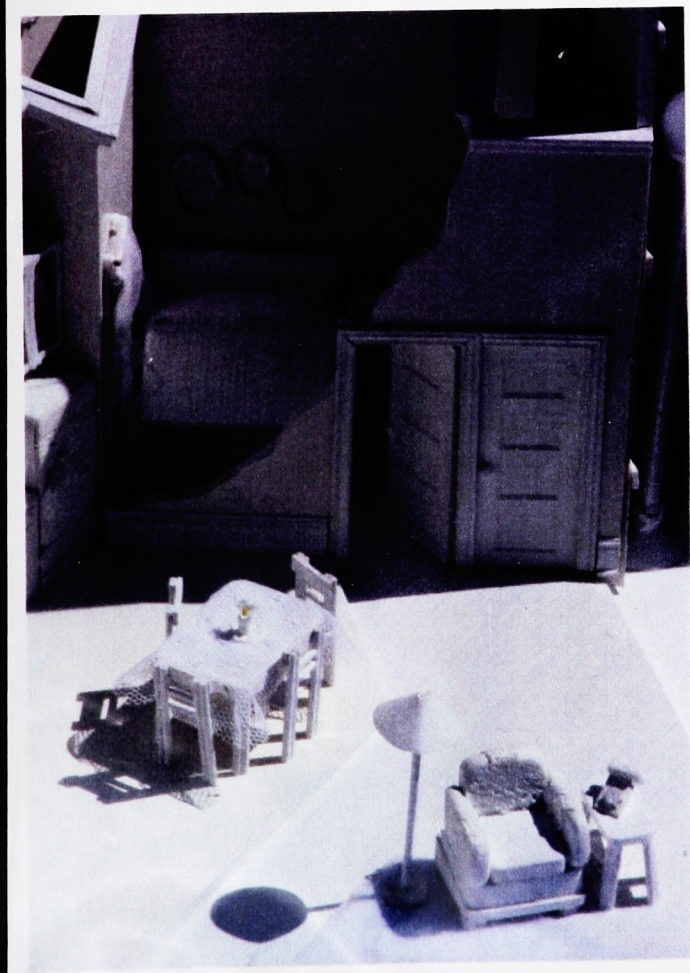
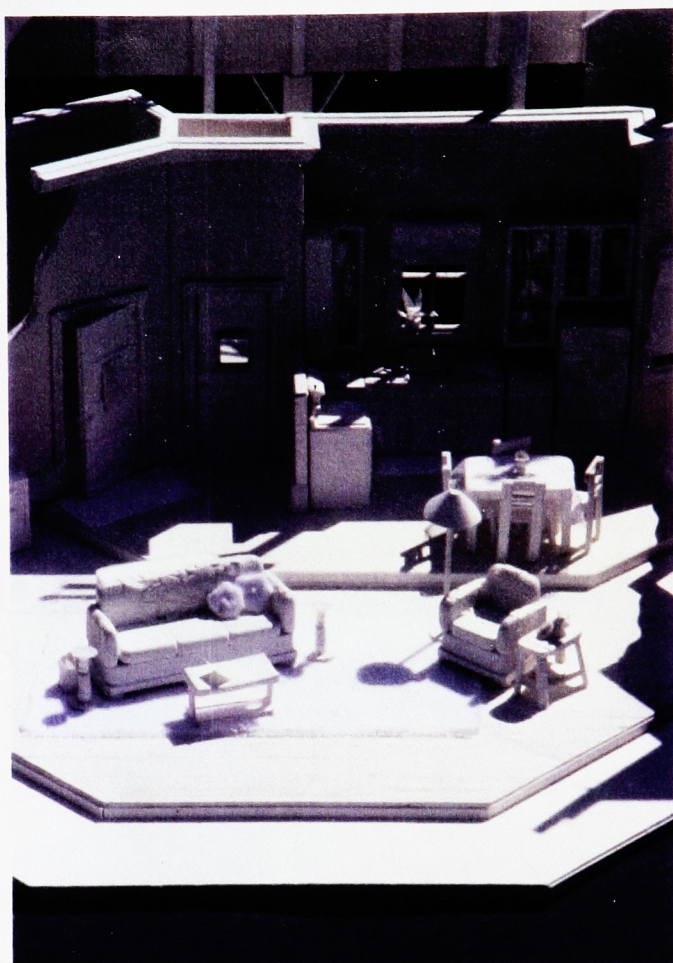
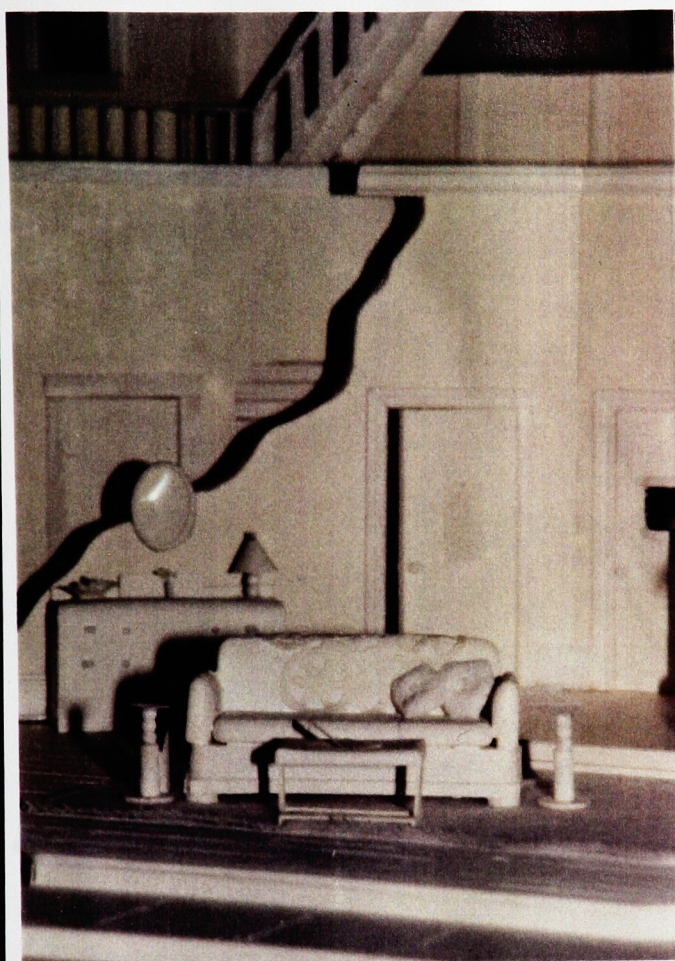
Cochren's Ground Plan and Sketch

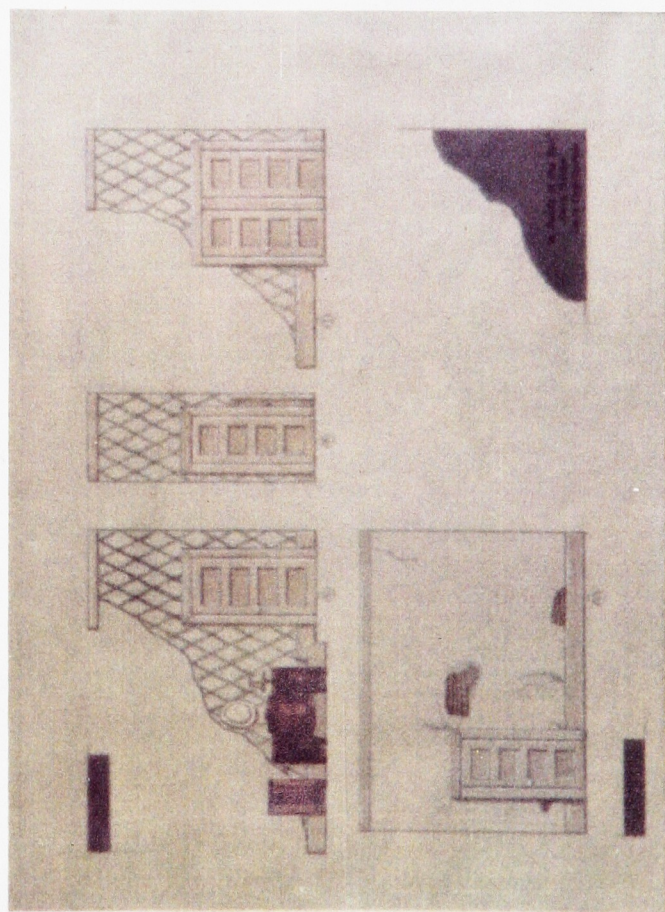
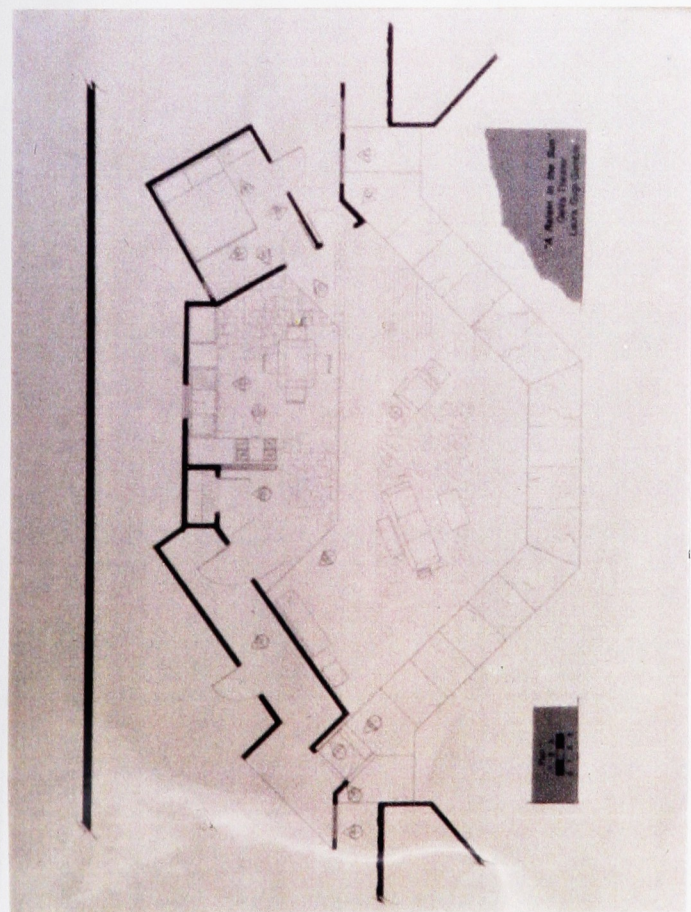
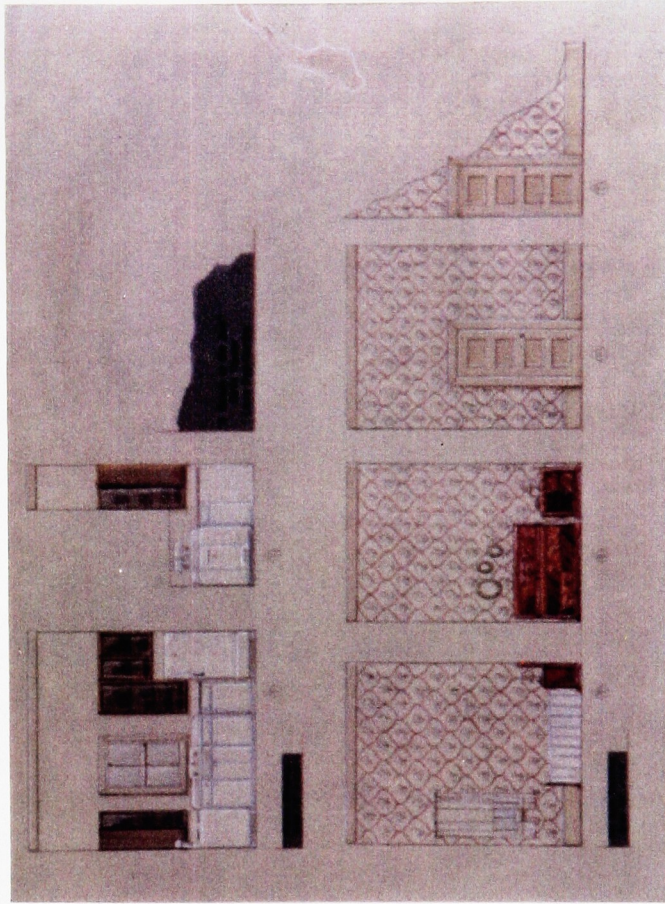
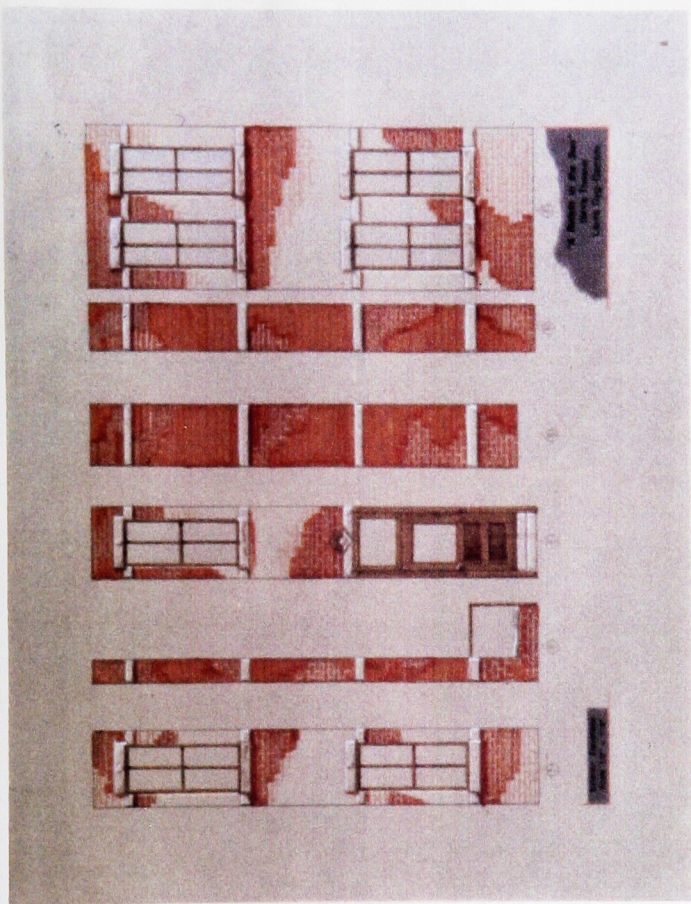


APPENDIX J

FINAL MODEL AND DRAWINGS







LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure

- 1 Chicago and Downstate, pg.98. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 2 Chicago and Downstate, pg.99. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 3 Chicago and Downstate, pg.101. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 4 Chicago and Downstate, pg.105. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 5 Chicago and Downstate, pg.108. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 6 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.82.
- 7 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.65.
- 8 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.82.
- 9 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.65.
- 10 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.83.
- 11 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.83.
- 12 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.62.
- 13 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.83.
- 14 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.55.
- 15 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.55.
- 16 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.34.
- 17 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.42.
- 18 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.42.
- 19 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.113.
- 20 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.113.
- 21 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.113.
- 22 Furniture of the Depression Era, pg.113.
- 23 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Oct. 1937, pg.95.
- 24 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Sept. 1937, pg.111.
- 25 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Apr. 1938, pg.79.
- 26 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Dec. 1937, pg.7.
- 27 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Dec. 1937, pg.81.
- 28 Advertisement from Better Homes and Gardens Feb. 1938, pg.11.
- 29 Chicago and Downstate, pg.146. Photograph taken by Jack Delano.
- 30 Chicago and Downstate, pg.140. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 31 Fashion Sketchbook, pg.67. Illustration by Mary Quant.
- 32 Fashion Sketchbook, pg.99. Illustration by Mary Quant
- 33 This Fabulous Century 1940-1950, pg.38. Photograph by Nina Leen from PIX Inc.
- 34 Chicago and Downstate, pg.109. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 35 Chicago and Downstate, pg.139. Photograph taken by Russell Lee.
- 36 Chicago and Downstate, pg.175. Photograph taken by Jack Delano.
- 37 Felix E. Cochren's ground plan for *A Raisin in the Sun*.
- 38 Felix E. Cochren's set rendering for *A Raisin in the Sun*.

WORKS CITED

Better Homes and Gardens, September 1937.

Better Homes and Gardens, October 1937.

Better Homes and Gardens, December 1937.

Better Homes and Gardens, February 1938.

Better Homes and Gardens, April 1938.

Bowen, Ezra. ed. This fabulous Century 1940-1950. Vol. V. New York: Time Life Books Inc., 1969.

Hansberry, Lorraine. A Raisin in the Sun. New York, Hollywood, Toronto, London: Samuel French., 1987

Peacock, John. Fashion Sketchbook 1920-1960. New York: Avon Publishers, 1977.

Reid, Robert L. and Larry A. Viskochil. ed. Chicago and Downstate. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Resch, Gary. "Creating the Set of A Raisin in the Sun". A Raisin in the Sun program. GeVa theatre and Park Productions, 1991.

Swedberg, Robert W., and Harriett Swedberg. Furniture of the Depression Era. Collectors Books